NEWS / A2
SPORTS / A29
BUSINESS / B1
MOTORING / B2-3

PAL union says 80% of workers vote to strike

By Fiscis G. Manzcilla and Norman Bordadora

GROUND EMPLOYEES of Philippine Airlines (PAL), the country's flag carrier, yesterday voted to stage a strike as they brought pressure on the Malacañang-brokered talks to resolve a dispute over the company's outsourcing and retrenchment plans.

"We're getting strong support from our members. The vote has been very orderly and we will announce the (official) re-

PAL UNION A17

No compromise

on condoms; senators firm on budget cut

Filipino booters

look to post new milestone vs Burma

Forex reserves

breach $60-B mark

25 tips to help

make your motoring life easier

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Wednesday, December 8, 2010 ★★ 16 sections / Vol. 25 / No. 361 P18

Doctors, bishops agree: Life begins at fertilization

THE PHILIPPINE Medical Association (PMA) and the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) have agreed that life begins during fertilization, thus the need to protect unborn babies in the reproductive health bill.

But the PMA is "not necessarily against artificial family planning," said Dr. Arthur Carli, PMA executive director.

DOCTORS A17

PRESIDENT AQUINO No comment

SC leaks ruling: Truth body illegal

By Nikko Dizon

THE DECISION was swift as it was unusual in the secrecy-shrouded Supreme Court that sprang a surprise leak.

The high tribunal yesterday declared Executive Order No. 1 creating the Philippine Truth Commission unconstitutional, setting a major obstacle to the Aquino administration's pledge to prosecute former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for corruption.

The Supreme Court usually speaks through its decision, but spokesperson Glen Guerra made the announcement at a news conference that the high tribunal had voted 10-5 on the case even before Associate Justice Jose Mendoza could write the decision.

"The majority among others, held that EO 1 violates the equal protection clause of the Constitution in as much as it singles out for investigation the reports of graft and corruption in the previous administration," she said.

Guerra said that there were other grounds cited in the decision that nullified Mr. Aquino's executive order but the violation of the equal protection clause was the "common ground in the opinion of the majority."

Arroyo's allies in the House of Representatives led by Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman and Isar-

SC LEAKS A10

REP GLORIA ARROYO Mum

'GMA is untouchable'

President, Cabinet advised: Get smart

UNTOUCHABLE.

This was how critics of former President Macapagal-Arroyo, now a Pampanga representative, reacted yesterday to the Supreme Court decision that junked the Philippine Truth Commission that President Aquino had formed to go after his predecessor.

Arroyo's allies, however, said the ruling was a triumph of the rule of law.

Rodolfo "Fort" Lozada, who blew the whistle on the $329-million NBN-ZTE deal, urged Mr. Aquino to be a little smarter in dealing with Arroyo's "road-blocks."

"GMA was clever enough and acted soon she's still closer to make sure that her back will be protected by hosting so many cohorts and allies behind in the event of crossing lines that guarantee them immunity," Lozada said.

Retired Archbishop Oscar

GMA A13

HIGHLY UNUSUAL Chief Justice Renato Corona

WHAT NOW? Former Chief Justice Hilario Davide

Senate approves amnesty declaration

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE SENATE yesterday approved President Aquino's Proclamation No. 75 granting amnesty to Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and military officers, soldiers and civilians (including communist rebels) who participated in three military uprisings during the Arroyo administration.

Fourteen senators supported the amnesty, one (Sen. Jinkee Arroyo) opposed it and another

SENATE A6

'You cannot stop truth from coming out'

By Christian V. Esguerra and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

"YOU CANNOT stop the truth from coming out. If it doesn't come out in the truth commission, it will still come out one way or another."

Carlos Medina, a member of the Philippine Truth Commission that the Supreme Court knocked down as unconstitutional in a ruling announced yesterday said this and summed up reaction of Aquino administration stalwarts.

Mr. Aquino declined comment when interviewed by reporters at the Clark Freeport, where he led groundbreaking rites for Medical City. He also said he had not seen a copy of the ruling.

But his spokesperson, Edwin Lacierda, lamented the decision.

"It will definitely set back our efforts on reform and accountability on what happened during the last 10 years and all the scandal that sprouted during those years," Lacierda told reporters.

Former Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., the head of the commissioners, said he had yet to read the decision but that he did not think the arguments advanced

YOU CANNOT A15

WikiLeaks founder surrenders

LONDON—WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange surrendered to London police on Tuesday. The move is part of a Swedish sex-crimes investigation, the latest blow to an organization that faces legal, financial and technological challenges after releasing

WIKILEAKS A17

Catfight erupts over Ping hunt: Rosebud vs Sandra

By Alcuin Papa

THE HUNT for Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson has triggered a catfight between two scrappy women who have shown no fear in challenging those in power.

After Lacson "nemesis" Mary "Rosebud" Ong last weekend called on the government to issue a shoot-to-kill order against the senator, "partway" whistle-blower Sandra Cam called a radio station and said Ong should "shut up."

Ong came back and said Cam should mind her own business.

Lacson has been the object of a

CATFIGHT A11

TELLING THE FILIPINO STORY TO THE WORLD

Prepare for war, Palace warns Sandy

By Thelma Sioson San Juan
Lifestyle Editor

"SANDY, prepare for war!"

Inquirer president and CEO Alexandra "Sandy" Prieto-Romualdez will never forget the day she was told that on the phone. It was in 1999 when the then Estrada administration would order the paper's top advertisers to purge the infamous boycott of the Inquirer.

"I will never forget the day I got a call from a Cabinet secretary asking us to kill the story," Romualdez recalled 11 years later. "I called back to say the editors can't because

PREPARE A6

RALLYING THE TROOPS Inquirer president and CEO Sandy Prieto-Romualdez addresses Inquirer general assembly on July 23, 1999.

Editors' Note: For 25 days, we will be rolling stories about the Inquirer to mark the paper's 25th anniversary on Dec. 9, 2010. Some are little inside stories but impacting on how we cover unfolding events; some are mark-the-day stories that become talk-of-the-town items; others are turning point stories that have changed the landscape of history; and others, big or small, seize the heart and never let go.

But whatever, the line is set: we'll tell you the story.

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

No compromise on condoms

Cut in P880-M 'family health' budget non-negotiable, senators say

COPW Serving and Protecting the Filipino Consumer

GOV'T WATCH Serving and Protecting the Filipino Consumer

RAUL T. CONCEPCION
CONSUMER ADVOCATE

AN APPEAL FOR COOPERATION AMONG CONSUMERS, BUSINESS OWNERS, & GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE THAT THOSE IN NEED HAVE A MERRY CHRISTMAS

As we start the Christmas season, COPW and GOV'T WATCH wish President Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III a very Merry Christmas.

The nation is filled with euphoria and has high hopes that PNoy will continue to govern guided by and building on the legacy of his late parents, Senator Ninoy and President Cory.

Today, **the confidence level of Filipinos in the government and the country's economy is the highest it has been in a long time** as shown by the recent survey by Pulse Asia that rated the popularity of PNoy at 79%.

Today is also the **best time** for us to do our share in **NATION BUILDING** by **ALL working together: Consumers** and **Business Owners** paying correct taxes, the **Government** implementing a more efficient tax collection system.

It is our **taxes** that fund the government's much-needed social development programs that **benefit the poor**.

Let us all work together in sharing our blessings with the less fortunate because they are the ones who are most in need.

THEREFORE, that is the true meaning and spirit of Chrismas.

LET US DO OUR SHARE:

We urge **BUSINESS OWNERS** to **SECURE** an Authority to Print Receipts and Invoices **(ATP)**.

We ask **CONSUMERS** to **ALWAYS ASK** for an Official Receipt when making purchases and to check that **stores indicate their Tax Identification Number (TIN)** in their official receipts.

GOV'T WATCH reaffirms its commitment to continue the mandate of its predecessor COPW to serve and protect the Filipino Consumer, especially the poor, through monitoring transparency and accountability in the spirit of good governance.

In 2011, we will work primarily with finance Secretary Cesar Purisima on BIR & BOC; government regulatory agencies like DoE, PSALM, ERC, NAPOCOR, PNOC; private entities like MERALCO and TEAM ENERGY that operate coal plants. In exchanging ideas on how we can work together as a team in achieving our mutual goals.

We want your feedback.

__AGREE __DISAGREE

Text COPW REACT <AGREE OR DISAGREE> to 2910

Find us in Facebook: type GOV'T WATCH.
Or visit us at www.govtwatch.net

We welcome comments from Filipinos living here and abroad.

RAUL T. CONCEPCION
Chairman

By Christian V. Esguerra

SENATORS yesterday served notice on their counterparts in the House of Representatives that they would not enter into a compromise on the decision to reduce the Department of Health's budget for contraceptives by P872 million.

"The issue of contraceptives—as far as I and the majority of the Senate are concerned—is non-negotiable," Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III told the reporters after the first bicameral meeting on the proposed P1,645-trillion national budget for next year.

Sotto predicted that he would clash with House Minority Leader Edcel Lagman, who is pushing for the passage of a reproductive health and population control measures.

Both of them have been picked to join the small group that would attempt to reconcile the House and Senate versions of the General Appropriations Bill.

Sotto stood pat on keeping only P8 million in the proposed P880-million "family health" budget, which includes the purchase of condoms and other types of contraceptives.

Result of a caucus

Sen. Franklin Drilon, finance committee chair, echoed Sotto's position, noting that the reduction was the result of a caucus by senators before they passed the general appropriations bill on second and third reading last week.

"We are serious about this because we have to respect the position of our majority leader and we have to carry out the mandate of the caucus," Drilon said in a phone interview.

Drilon said caucus also did not want to approve an enormous allocation for the purchase of contraceptives pending the passage of a reproductive health bill.

"We do not want to jump the gun on the policy issue of the RH bill," he said. "Pending that, don't plant (the purchase of) contraceptives in the budget."

Drilon clarified that the Senate version of the budget bill slashed only P800 million—not P872 million—from the DOH budget for contraceptives. He said the department would still have P560 million at its disposal if the Senate version would prevail.

Realigned

But Senate ministered that the DOH budget lost P872 million. He said the P800 million reduction represented the amount senators decided to realign for state universities and colleges and science and technology scholarships.

Sotto said Congress had yet to decide where to put the remaining P571 million slashed from the DOH budget. He noted that the P8-million allocation left for the DOH was earmarked solely for the purchase of condoms as per the result of the Senate caucus.

Asked if he would be amenable to allowing government money to be spent on contraceptives after an RH bill was passed, Sotto said, "To me, no matter how much the administration is, contraceptives are definitely out."

Sotto earlier declared that if people wanted condoms and other types of contraceptives, they should buy them for themselves and not ask money from the government.

In reconciling versions of the budget bill, the Senate and House yesterday decided to allow their respective finance committee chair to tackle specific differences. Drilon said the result would then be relayed to small groups formed for each panel.

Drilon will be joined by Sens. Alan Cayetano, Joseph Estrada, Alfredo Lim, Panfilo Lacson, Pia Cayetano, Ralph Recto, Antonio Trillanes IV, Manuel Villar Jr. and Loren Legarda.

Majority Leader Miguel Zubiri, Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel III, Senators Francis Escudero, Jinggoy Estrada, Gregorio Honasan, Ramon Revilla Jr., Manuel Roxas II, Juan Miguel Zubiri and Senate President Pro Tempore Jamby Madrigal did not attend the meeting.

Batangas, Cavite facilities worry US–WikiLeaks

By DJ Yap

TWO UNDERSEA telecommunication facilities located in the Philippines were on a list of critical infrastructure and key resources of the United States in foreign countries which, if attacked, could harm US interests, a secret cable released by online whistle-blower WikiLeaks showed.

The facilities were undersea cable landings in Cavite and Batangas that are part of the EAC-C2C, Asia's largest submarine network that connects phone and data lines between countries.

The facilities are owned by Pacnet, a leading telecommunications provider that operates the EAC-C2C, a fiber optic submarine network spanning 36,800 kilometers between Hong Kong, China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore and the Philippines.

Listing of facilities

WikiLeaks posted the document on its website on Dec. 1. The memo was dated Feb. 2, 2009, and addressed there the US Secretary of State. It cataloged hundreds of crucial overseas facilities, including telecommunication cable landings, hydroelectric plants, pipelines, pharmaceutical companies, mines, and even ocean passageways.

The posting of the list—compiled by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) with assistance from the Department of State and other government agencies—drew condemnation from US officials, who said it threatened national security.

Updated yearly, the list is maintained by the DHS, which was working to update it in February 2009 by getting input from US diplomats.

The memo cited the definition of "critical infrastructure" in the US Patriot Act of 2001 as "systems and assets, whether physical or virtual, so vital to the United States the incapacitation or destruction of such systems and assets would have a debilitating impact on security, national economic security, national public health or safety, or any combination of those matters."

"Key resources," on the other hand, are defined in the Homeland Security Act of 2002 as "publicly or privately controlled resources essential to the minimal operations of the economy and government."

Secret nature

The memo was classified "secret/noforn," or not releasable to foreign nationals, governments or non-US citizens. Specifically, three cross-border warning" in the heading that read "not for internet distribution."

Facilities in other southeast Asian countries were also on the list, including a tin mine in Indonesia and EAC-C2C cable landings in Singapore and the Straits of Malacca between Malaysia and Indonesia.

Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Eduardo Malaya declined to comment, saying that "these reports are internal in the US government."

US Embassy in Manila spokesperson Rebecca Thompson had earlier said the state department "does not comment on classified documents, which may have been leaked," as a matter of policy.

Of the more than 251,000 US memos acquired by WikiLeaks, 1,716 originated from the US Embassy in Manila although some had been geared earlier (as of Monday). On the other hand, there were 2,830 documents with reference to the Philippines.

Airplane baby won't be home for Christmas

By Lailo B. Saavedra

ADELAIDE (AAP) Foreign Francis may not be home for his first Christmas.

Baby George is likely to spend the holidays in the care of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) because his mother is still undergoing questioning, according to Immigration Minister Tricia Bidoza.

Bidoza said Baby George and his mother have stayed since she left him in an airplane lavatory trash bin in September, but he has now been placed under her custody since custody and it was not yet time for her to take her child.

But Baby George and his mother reportedly, Bidoza added.

The DSWD's aim caring for Baby George's mother, who had told social workers officials that she were wants to care for her son and that she regrets leaving him behind in the airplane.

Bidoza said the mother continues to undergo therapy and has been helping care for the other children in the DSWD's custody.

This helps with her healing process and allows her to cope with her guilt feelings, she added.

The mother is also undergoing counseling because she had disclosed that she had been sexually abused by her employer in Qatar.

HUNGER STRIKERS, BUT...

Palace bristles at Ninoy-Morong 43 analogy

By Christian G. Bautista and Norman Bordadora

MALACAÑANG TOOK umbrage yesterday at the suggestion of Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Teodoro Casiño that President Aquino show more compassion for the "Morong 43" since they, like his father, the late former Senator Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., had gone on a hunger strike for justice.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Lacierda said Casiño was "well aware" of the "huge difference" between the situation today in the Aquino administration and during the Marcos dictatorship.

"This is not a repressive regime," Lacierda said.

In a report on Inquirer.net yesterday, Casiño was quoted as saying: "Being Ninoy's son, Noynoy should know that an indefinite hunger strike is no joke. It is a protest that could lead to death. He should realize that just like his father, the Morong 43 are taking such a drastic step because of a deep conviction that they are being unjustly detained and denied their rights."

Under study

The health workers began their hunger strike last week, saying this was the only recourse left to end their illegal detention following their arrest in February 2010 in Morong, Rizal.

Lacierda reiterated the government was studying the case of the Morong 43, arrested in Morong, Rizal, in February on suspicion of being members of the communist New People's Army.

"We had said there was a delay in the search warrant and we will do what we can within the bounds of the law," Lacierda said.

But yesterday in Baler, Pangasinan, Presidential Adviser Ronald Llamas said he spare him from more questions on the granting of amnesty to the Morong 43.

He said he had answered the question too many times by saying that while the evidence against the 43 may have been ill-gotten, the case was no longer in the hands of the executive branch but already in the courts.

Like a broken record

"Can I just ask that if possible this will be the last time I will answer questions on the Morong 43?" Mr. Aquino told reporters who followed him to Pasig where he turned over 338 housing units in a resettlement area to victims of typhoons.

"I'm already sounding like a broken record," he added.

"It's quite simple. The justice secretary has already rendered an opinion. She said the motion of the warrant seems to be defective," the President said.

"I already explained to you about the fruit of the poisoned tree. That is the position of the government. But the executive cannot order the release of these people without the sanction of the court," he said.

In 1975, Ninoy Aquino went on a hunger strike to protest the trumped-up charges against him before a military tribunal. He ended the strike after 40 days on the appeal of his family and supporters who were worried about his condition. — *With a report from Christian V. Esguerra and Jaime Laude in Pangasinan and Jess Diaz in Quezon*

Chopper deal bidding fails

DEFENSE Secretary Voltaire Gazmin has delivered all ongoing public bidding for big-ticket military purchases while he studies alternatives to the public bidding processes.

This came after Gazmin declared a failure of bidding for a P2.2 billion contract to supply the Philippine Air Force with seven attack helicopters, saying the company would have been "automatically disqualified from the government."

Gazmin also approved the recommendation of the Board of Inquiry (BOI) to order the acquisition of light-lift helos while the Department of National Defense (DND) asks the government Public Estates Authority to expropriate it from the public procurement process, according to Director Eduardo Ano.

Ano said the BOI concluded that "public bidding as a mode of procurement may not be the most effective means of acquiring highly technical and sophisticated defense materiel."

"They are now talking of 'limited source bidding' which has a different character from an open public bidding [wherein] whoever gives the lowest price wins," he said. — Dona Pazollagan

'FALSE IMPRISONMENT'

'Terror suspect' sues PNP for half a billion

By Julie M. Aurelio

IN WHAT could be the first test of the 2007 Human Security Act, a man who was acquitted of charges that he was a "terrorist" filed a half billion peso suit against the Philippine National Police (PNP) for his "false and baseless" imprisonment, which allegedly included torture and psychological abuse.

In a civil complaint filed yesterday before a Quezon City court, Allan Almonte sought P975 million in damages against the PNP and five of its members who arrested him in 2006 on suspicion that he was a member of the Abu Sayyaf terrorist network.

He also claimed he was subjected to electrocution and other forms of torture, and suffered psychological trauma during his imprisonment for over two and a half years.

Protective provision

Under the the so-called protective provisions of the Human Security Act of 2007, any person arrested of suspected but is soon acquitted is entitled to damages. He may be awarded P500,000 for every day that he or she is detained or deprived of liberty.

If he wins, the awarded damages will be automatically charged against the appropriations of the police agency that filed the charges against the accused, who may also file criminal or administrative charges against those who wrongfully charged him.

The law also bans torture or any form of coercion in investigation and interrogation of suspected terrorists. State security officers found guilty of torture can face imprisonment of up to 10 years.

Almonte, through his lawyer Feliberto Abuyuan Jr., said he was entitled to damages as he suffered irreversible damage because of being "wrongfully and maliciously detained."

Named as defendants were the PNP Supt. Roger James Bellaviete, Insp. Aristotle Fontanos, Insp. Danny Sung, PO2 Reynaldo Pap, SPO1 Peter Paul Pablico and PO3 Noel Bitan.

Almonte said he was arrested in Bukidnon City in 2006 and accused of being an Abu Sayyaf member. The arrest warrant served on Almonte was under the name of "a certain Ali." Nowhere on the warrant did Almonte's name actually appear, the complaint said.

He was then charged with violating Presidential Decree 1866 or the "Decree Codifying the Laws on Illegal/Unlawful possession, manufacture, dealing in, acquisition or disposition of firearms, ammunition or explosives." The charge is covered by the 2007 Human Security Act.

The case was docketed as Criminal Case No. 130141 before the Mindanao City Regional Trial Court Branch 171.

In 2008, Almonte was finally allowed to file his documents as evidence in which he complained that he was falsely and maliciously accused.

In an order dated Oct. 6, 2008, the court granted Almonte's plea, dismissing the case and outrightly and indefinitely to release him from detention for "insufficiency of evidence."

"[The] prosecution was not able to prove that Allan was that same "a certain Ali" they were looking for," the complaint noted.

Palawan losing coral reefs due to illegal live fish trade

THE ILLEGAL live fish trade in the country is reaching alarming levels and is accelerating the destruction of massive coral reefs, particularly in the Palawan area.

"The trade of live reef fish in the country goes on unabated and at the rate it's going, critical coral reefs particularly in the Palawan area will soon be gone due to dynamite and cyanide fishing. It is high time that government stopped it," Red Saudelo, Focal Person of GLAACC (Global Legal Action Against Cl...

Melvin Jazmines, 59

MELVIN VALERA Jazmines on Dec. 4 at the UST Hospital. A Grand Chancellor of the Alpha Phi Delta Fraternity (APD) 1974 batch, Jazmines is survived by his wife Presilla Cleofas Jazmines; daughter Nilla Kristine Jazmines and mother Ma. Cleofas Valera Jazmines. His siblings are Alan, Edson, Edwin, Bette, Rosalie Liberated] and Aniceto.

The body lies at the Arandez Church Chapel, Metro Park Subdivision, Cloverleaf, Balintawak, Jr., in Iona Quezon City. Interment will be at the Loyola Memorial Park today after a Mass at 9 a.m.

...mate Change) Region IV and is a statement.

He cited reports reaching GLAACC which indicated that the live reef fish trade in Palawan has already resulted in dwindling fish stock, particularly the groupers (Lapu-lapu), and the destruction of coral reefs because of the use of cyanide, a highly poisonous substance.

Fishermen spray cyanide into the coral reefs to stun unsuspecting fish so they can be easily caught with nets.

Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward S. Hagedorn has called for direct action by civic society against the thriving illegal live fish trade.

Hagedorn issued the call after truckloads of live reef fish suspected to have been captured using cyanide were intercepted by the combined team from the city's Philippine National Police and Special Operations Group as the vehicles passed through Puerto Princesa City highway en route to major distribution points.

"It's sad to note that the provincial officials of Palawan seemed to be unmindful of the destructive effects of this illegal trade to the environment especially to the coral reefs," Hagedorn lamented.

Grinch steals Christmas at Naia

By Jerome Aning

THEY CAN smile, but they can't say the most common greeting during the Christmas season.

Bureau of Immigration personnel assigned at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport have been ordered not to greet arriving and departing passengers "Merry Christmas" and similar holiday greetings to avoid the impression that they are soliciting gifts, whether in cash or in kind.

Immigration officer-in-charge Rosalio Ledesma said the prohibition applies not only to immigration officers manning the airport counters but also to supervisors and intelligence agents detailed at the premises' exits.

"While it is mandatory for all immigration officers in our airports to always make while on duty they are forbidden from greeting passengers 'Merry Christmas,'" Ledesma said in a statement.

The immigration chief said the directive aims to avoid the impression that the IB personnel entending the greetings were asking for a Christmas gift from the passengers.

"Such gesture, even if sincere, might be misconstrued as asking for a tip as it's better that they refrain from extending the greeting," he said.

Ledesma said that while some quarters might view the ban as extreme, preserving the reputation of the bureau and its employees was a paramount concern.

"It is not good for our immigration officers at the airports, who are the first to meet arriving Filipinos and foreign travelers, to be perceived as gift-collectors," he explained.

"They can just give the passengers a warm and friendly smile, and a very efficient service above all," he added, referring to Bosis's "Ho go-the-extra-mile" driver.

The Christmas greeting ban is not a new policy; it was first instituted during the time of Immigration Commissioner Pedro Bodegraye, who is now a congressman.

If airport operations division (AOD) chief Maria Antoinette Bucasas said the ban on christmas greetings will last until the end of the holiday season, during the influx of returning balikbayans (expatriates) and overseas Filipino workers to spend the holidays with their families.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, December 8, 2010
Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

1st Reading: Gen 3:9-15, 20
2nd Reading: Eph 1:3-6, 11-12
Gospel: Lk 1:26-38

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth. He was sent to a young virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the family of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

The angel came to her and said, "Be joyful, full of grace, the Lord is with you." Mary was troubled at these words, wondering what this greeting could mean.

But the angel said, "Do not fear, Mary, for God has looked kindly on you. You shall conceive and bear a son and you shall call him Jesus. He will be great and shall rightly be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the kingdom of David, his ancestor. he will reign over the people of Jacob forever and his reign shall have no end."

Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be if I am a virgin?" And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the holy child to be born shall be called Son of God. Even your relative Elizabeth, in expecting a son in her old age, although she was unable to have a child, and she is now in her sixth month. With God nothing is impossible."

Then Mary said, "I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me as you have said." And the angel left her.

Commentary

The Marian God gives us are intended to be

The blessings we pass on to other people.

They are all signs of God's presence to others through us.

We will all be judged according to the way

we share the blessing we ourselves are given.

Our own salvation depends on it.

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Aquino confident of budget

By Norman Bordadora

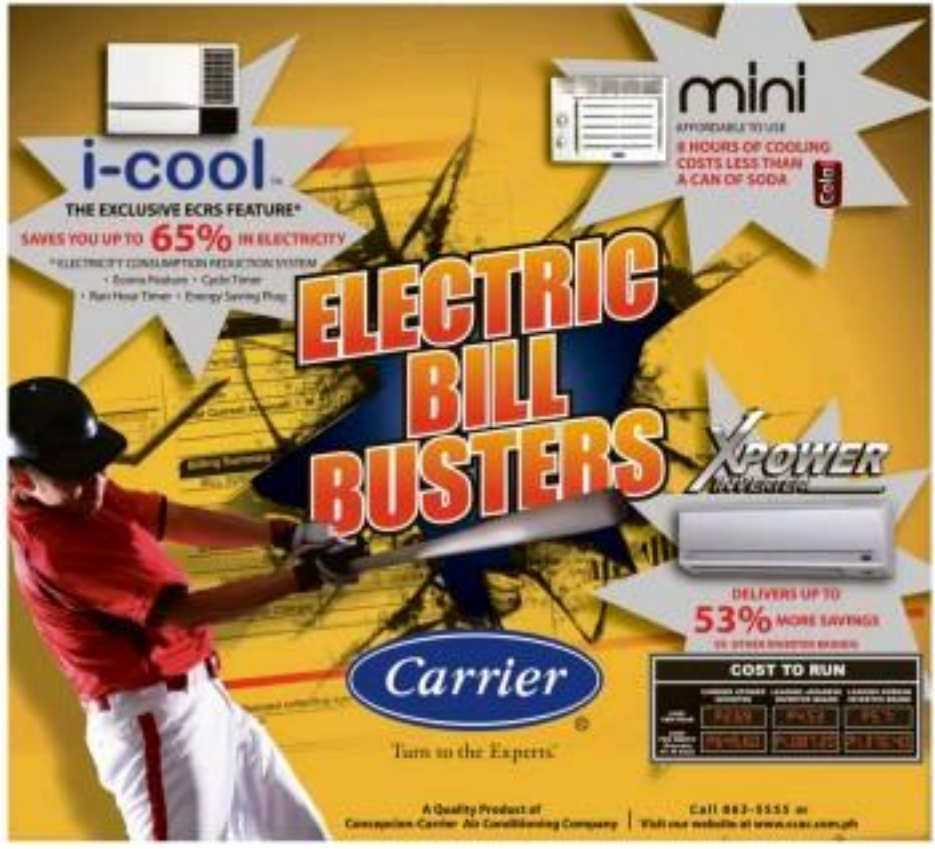
MANILA, Philippines—President Aquino assembly expressed optimism that he will be able to sign the proposed P1.6 trillion national budget for 2011 before the yearend.

"That matter that Christmas for deliberately before the year ends," Mr. Aquino told reporters when asked when he expects Congress to submit the budget for his signature.

President Aquino also said that he already had quite an extensive meeting with the Department of Social Welfare and Development on the initiation of the P21-billion conditional cash transfer (CCT) program.

The CCT is one of the conversation items in the budget that were closely scrutinized by the Senate and the House, before each chamber passed the appropriations.

"I'm confident that everything that would be done has been done in really fine tune the programs and we're still open to other issues who might tell us ways on delivering this vital service to quite a significant amount of families who live below the poverty line," President Aquino told reporters.



Prepare for war, Palace warns Sandy

From page A1

it's factual and so important news of the day. But please send us your statement."

It was after Statesmobiles said so, that the Cabinet member, whom Statesmobiles declines to identify to this day, uttered that threat of "war."

In that time, as mostly everyone knows by now, the Inquirers had been running stories on the "book scam" in the education department, which drove Education Secretary Andrew Gonzalez had requested, and on the allegations that a member of the Estrada family was on the government payroll.

That was when the call to stop the stories came.

"That was when all you have put together—what you have on the wall... the mission, vision is challenged," Statesmobiles said. "Crisis can really challenge what you have on the wall ... how much are you willing to put at stake..."

Everything, it would turn out.

The Inquirer of 1899 was a turning point in the history of the Inquirer, indeed of newspapers, in the Philippine journalism... when freedom of the press was challenged anew and a newspaper's commitment to truth helped hasten the fall of a popular President.

Sense of heritage

That point in history forms part of the Inquirer heritage. It is this sense of heritage ... relatively young as the Inquirer may be, at 22— that the Inquirer ordinarily upholds and tries to pass on to its younger staff.

The Inquirer management and staff enjoy the rare privileges, and responsibility, of being able to write its own history...or tell and retell its story, indeed the story of the Filipino people...so that the younger generations may know and so that lessons may be learned.

It is also why the publication of media has been relaxed to blogging (a free for all exercise that has yet to be reined in by the ugly and disciplined of journalism), and when technology becomes as important as the content, a newspaper's control of heritage—a sense of its own history...becomes all the more valuable.

In the case of Inquirer, its sense of heritage becomes also its defining edge over the rest of today's media.

It is a sense of heritage built on the bedrock of the Inquirer—which is editorial independence and credibility.

And it is apparent that this sense of heritage and the importance of editorial independence are not lost on Statesmobiles, now only in her 40s and who was only a year into the presidency of the Inquirer during the 2000 Inquirer (she was appointed president in April 1998).

"It is matters of discernment, when one reviews the facts, I believe that the work of our editors and reporters can either strengthen or weaken our position," Statesmobiles reflects.

After was referring to Inquirer the story is measured by the rules and standards of accuracy and fairness.

Mutual respect

From the 1999 Philippine Daily Inquirer (PDI) Inquirer onward, when the board gave its full support behind the story, to re-spend, not only did the Inquirer's editorial independence become more palpable, it also became apparent to Statesmobiles that her relationship with the paper's editors and staff would be built on mutual trust and respect.

"What we've really worked at," Statesmobiles said, "is the mutual respect and trust, which will come, I hope, from seeing the guidelines are clear-by."

She added about the division in between the journalists schools call it "Church" and "State"... "You know either one management and editors is bound to maneuver once that line is crossed."

When the Inquirer learned, Statesmobiles realized how grave the consequences would be as "I had to bring in others [the board] into the decision."

And the Inquirer, as to common knowledge now, decided to throw its resources behind what would become Inquirer's fierce battle for survival.

"But also what makes the difference to the team we have, I have been blessed, is to surround the Inquirer team that moves as one," she added.

There is another reason for remembering that enemy prevail. "We were overwhelmed by the support of readers and advertisers who stayed with us," she said.

It's obvious that since she became Inquirer president in 1998, apart from the Inquirer, Statesmobiles's leadership—unlike in the movies...hasn't relied on "aha" moments or spectacular single moments that yielded instant learning or awakening. She's had put to pinpoint "aha moments" because learning has been a continuous process, not spurts or isolated spurts.

Not alone at the top

"Saying no to friends is not easy job," she said.

"What we've really worked hard at"—the Inquirer did..."to be mutual respect and trust with editorial. If people figure they're being wronged, they give me a call and I can only promise them a review, with objectivity ... What I'm glad about is we've more fair now."

Learning is easy now friends, foes, lobbyists and advertisers—or with vanishing external pressures—hasn't been easy. Get ghosts that are as much there as what Statesmobiles said as from value she didn't say—but long years and classified as promise that's a cross between a frown and a smile should say enough.

During trying moments or when the temptation to quit her job becomes strong, Statesmobiles falls back on a prospect that reminds of Jumbo to her—"Some still spend my commitments Or PDI changing coding or sorry—for various, that still strengthens he is. Emotional anchor is necessary creativity and dynamism."

Its about values she going grow tough, she finds far about, out of and beyond the "how" and into what should be and ought be.

That's a method of leadership that is rarely found in today's corporate world that can't look past its nose (the bottom line).

Statesmobiles doesn't feel alone at the top. PDI chair Eleuterio Rufino-Prieto, her mother, is around for her to sound out. Also, she has a good confidante, Philip Remmlinger, her husband with whom she has three sons.

Equals

The 11-year-old marriage of Sandy to Philip is in itself a rarity that is part and parcel of contemporary Philippine history primarily because the union of the two fiercest newspaper dynasties the second generation of the Statesmobiles Inquirer-Chua Enquirer got one more combustible than that.

So, how has Chu-Inquirer survived politics, and more specifically Inquirer's mutual orphanhood?

"It works because of Philip," she said, in which, does in a more serious—"We love each other so much. If our marriage wasn't strong, that would have been it."

She talks about the dynamics of their relationship, "He's also a good adviser, a confidante. I trust his views. Plus he has a progressive mind."

When Sandy knew herself to include John Inside or supports rumors/conclusions, inside the calls and/or issues in their home, one need only see how Philip listens over logistical details to recognize the support. For husband, it doesn't get any lovers than that.

So how do they continue to be his and her own person?

"We treat each other as equals. He respect each other's point of view. We listen but we respect each other's decision," she said.

Indeed Statesmobiles doesn't really feel alone at the top... "I've got Bill"—Maxine Rufino-Prieto—and I can lean on Philip."

"When you take things down to the nuts, I think it's because our values are alike," she said of her marriage.

However, there's another relationship which, perhaps not known to the public, helps shape the contemporary political stance of Inquirer, then-to-day. This is the relationship between Statesmobiles and the fiercely independent business editor in chief, Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc.

The other 'rvantage'

"You've talked about your marriage, we ask Statesmobiles, how about your "other marriage"—to Letty? Which is a harder marriage, we ask, to Philip or to Letty?

Statesmobiles bits out a good laugh, and said, instantly, "I believe in her integrity. That's other virtue is based on."

Not many know that there is a relationship that has been sustained—and not—through the years. It's the kindred spirit make regard raise only two journalists school, particularly as how editors and journalists, who put independence and credibility above all else, with strengths/limitations and management styles how their own performance goals in most before business stakeholders.

Magsanoc described Statesmobiles as a "quick study," in introducing a young graduate of ABM (Masters in Development Management) who joined the Inquirer in 1993 as executive assistant to the president, with zero experience in media.

What one many knew was how editor in chief and the second-stage graduate (Notre Dame-Greenwich in the US) developed not only a work relationship but a bond built on sharing of ideas, plans and visions...even conflicts.

The two women never feared the gender-stereotypes of the country's biggest and most controversial broadsheet. They built not the challenges... and rolled with the punches, so to speak...with great reserving, forbearance, and most important, good humor.

One believes that it helps tremendously that the two women are spiritual, because there have been times, in the newspaper's growth, that spirit wasn't enough, one needed to be tough as nails.

"From the very beginning, people opened up to me and shared the job," Statesmobiles recalled her early days in the Inquirer as a guest businesswoman to work with them."

In 1997, she was promoted to executive vice president.

What helped her learn on the job?

"I joined with a student's eye. It's important for me that I was there, not because I'm the daughter of the owner, but because we (she and the Inquirer) chose each other—the passion."

In fact what Statesmobiles was bringing in the job was a social capital's interest in people and the community.

7 months in Kenya

When she was 19, a sociology student at Notre Dame, she spent seven months in Kenya, with its indigenous people. It was a life-defining experience for a woman who came back to the Philippines wearing her hair (her older sister, Tessa/Pirate Valdes), didn't recognize her at the airport. ("Don't worry!)

"Be open to it, even if it seems to be different," Statesmobiles said of what the Kenya experience taught her. "It allowed me to be open to others—living with only a backpack and ten pair of socks. If you're lonely that way, everything else is peripheral after that."

Statesmobiles learned a sense of detachment by living in Africa.

"This is where I connect strongly with PDI—wanting to touch for change and progress in the community, to be the catalyst for social progress and change."

Statesmobiles brought into the job a social worker's philosophy. It was in 2008 that she established a foundation filled with the Inquirer's commitment to freedom and democracy...how laws and the papers's mission could help uplift the quality of life.

Infectious passion

During the 1998 EDSA revolution, Ambassador Howard Dee broached the idea of putting up a relief fund for Mindanao after the burning of Inquirer and that burning people were driven to on the poisonous east coast channel. This was how Tulong Dunong was formed for the relief and rehabilitation of the South.

"This was how I realized how media matters with my personal values very strongly."

She added: "A you into the job, I told myself it's something I could devote myself to. The passion of people here is infectious."

Her sociology background and passion for development work are reflected in her type of leadership—she believes and practices shared leadership. She believes in respecting and developing people's expertise and skills.

That's why she is known not to give up on people or strategies easily.

That's the stuff the Inquirer is made of.

CHOO-CHOO TRAIN Inquirer president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez (right) and Philippine National Railways General Manager Jose Regino's kick-off the debut of Bagumbayan Libre on the PNR lines by boarding along copies of the Thursday edition of the free paper when they took a train ride at Tutuban station in Manila.

GMA on amnesty: Where's the apology?

FORMER President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said the grant of amnesty to soldiers who attempted to unseat her must be exercised with caution especially when dealing with unrepentant mutineers.

"The granting of amnesty or pardon is truly a constructive action when it is motivated by a laudable objective, such as the reestablishment of national unity," Arroyo, now a Pampanga representative, said in a statement last night.

"But let us remember that it is also a singular action of executive generosity which should be dispensed with great caution, taking care always to exclude recidivists and offenders who remain unrepentant," she added.

Arroyo said it was the President's prerogative to grant amnesty to mutineers.

"This prerogative is similar to the prerogative of granting pardon, which I myself exercised during my term as President in the cases of Cmdr. Ernesto Querubin, Capt. Milo Maestrecampo, et al. but only after they had pleaded guilty, were convicted and publicly apologized for their offense," she said of some of the key players in the 2003 Oakwood mutiny.

Senate OKs amnesty

Front page A1

Sen. Gregorio Honasan II abstained. Honasan could benefit from the amnesty grant being a respondent in one of the coup d'etat cases.

The amnesty would take effect 15 days after the publication of the proclamation. The Department of National Defense was given up to 90 days to decide on those who have applied for amnesty.

In Baro, Bongalonan, 4th Infantry indicated that rebellion cases would proceed against those who would not apply for amnesty despite being covered by the proclamation.

"I would assume if our dossier would [submit]* of the amnesty, the wheels of justice will continue to move," the President told reporters.

"Amnesty not only forgives, but it also forgets.... The beneficiaries of Proclamation No. 75 appeal to our sense of compassion and generosity. They have endured enough suffering to last them a lifetime. This would be the greatest Christmas gift we could offer them," Sen. Teofisto Guingona said in his sponsorship speech of Senate Resolution No. 4 supporting the proclamation.

Guingona is the chair of the Senate committee on peace, unification and reconciliation.

Lack of resources

Arroyo said the grant was "unclouded" as he complained about the lack of consultation with Congress, the broad scope of the proclaimed act, and the lack of resources or admission of guilt by the rebel soldiers.

Sen. Miguel Zubiri voted "yes" to the amnesty but said he would have preferred that recidivists or those who would commit rebellion anyw ainow would not be eligible for amnesty again.

At the hearing of the Senate committee on peace, unification and reconciliation yesterday morning, Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa said: "The main purpose of the amnesty is to forgive and forget such that there's no more issues even for this case to remain pending."

The list of eligible military personnel and civilians was based on the pending cases filed by the Department of Justice during the past administration.

Ochoa and Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin clarified reports on the scope of the amnesty as senators argued whether civilians should be among those to be given amnesty.

Ochoa said that while there were leftist rebels included in the case filed by the Department of Justice, the amnesty would only apply to their acts of rebellion in any of the three coup d'etat attempts—the Oakwood mutiny, the Marine stand-off, and the Peninsula Manila siege.

Trillanes, one of the leaders of the Magdalo group, figured in both the Oakwood mutiny in 2003 and the Peninsula Manila siege in 2007. While in prison, he was for senator in 2007 and won.

List pointless

Sen. Francis Escudero said it was possible that other civilians could still receive and apply for amnesty since a number of people implicated in the acts of rebellion were not identified.

"The onus the ensure why is one pointless to come up with an official list of the eligible persons for amnesty," Escudero said in reaction to the brouhaha over the unverified list of those eligible for the amnesty which included Honasan.

Honasan, who led seven coup attempts against the administration of then President Corazon Aquino in the second half of the 1980s, was charged as a conspirator in the Marine stand-off.

Reinstatement

Gazmin said there were "mixed feelings" about the reinstatement of mutineers posts in their old ranks but he stated that the reinstatement was not that strong. "If we can explain the spirit of the proclamation they might understand it," the defense secretary said.

After the hearing, Senator Gil Antonio Cerilles, who was arrested in connection with the Marine stand-off, said: "If government will not walk the straight path, as long as idealistic officers, we cannot stop them from doing what is right."

Gazmin was released yesterday. With a report from Norman Bordadora

"Tuwid na Daan sa Tapat na Paglilingkod."

MESSAGES

By national privilege as the Department of Labor and Employment as he [illegible] year [illegible] Anniversary.

Four anniversary theme "Tuwid na Daan sa Tapat na Paglilingkod" greatly complements the administration's agenda of change through honest service and much-needed reforms for the benefit of our Filipinomes. I am honored by DOLE's commitment to work with me as an ALIP our Social Contract to the people. At just first a last chapter to your agency's long history of public service, I am confident that you will continue to nurture the integrity of the agency and protect the welfare of the Filipino workforce. Let us work together and establish a more progressive Philippines.

We are in a new era of hope. May is our opportunity to establish a society of advancement and equality, and a future wherein every Filipino has the chance to prosper from his or her hard work. Let us stay on the straight path to peace, stability, and prosperity.

BENIGNO S. AQUINO III
President
Republic of the Philippines

I wish to extend my sincere regards and congratulations to the Department of Labor and Employment on your 77th Anniversary.

DOLE has always been true value in developing our country's human resources. Serving [illegible] the Filipino workforce has been more competitive and employable.

The theme, "Tuwid na Daan sa Tapat na Paglilingkod," only mirrors your commitment to the administration's call to good governance. With your help, I believe that we can see better working conditions and labor standards in the country's workplaces.

More importantly, I laud your efforts to increase welfare and protection of Overseas Filipino Workers. It is my wish that this small yet combined efforts, sincere and honest, may bring and shape a settlement in this country.

Mabuhay kayo!

JEJOMAR C. BINAY
Vice President
Republic of the Philippines

The Department of Labor and Employment, on its 77th Founding Anniversary, stands at a crucial period in history.

We face the challenges to generate more decent jobs, to foster industrial peace based on sound justice, and to provide expanded welfare and protection to all Filipino workers—local and overseas, particularly the most vulnerable.

We also need to transform the institution into a bulwark of quality, prompt, and efficient services that adhere to the highest standards of honesty, integrity, and transparency.

All these are realities to be more committed and will that require us to take a serious look at our mandate, with a view of re-examining our policies and priorities.

The road to reform has brought us here. Guided by the six-point labor and employment agenda of B.E. President Benigno S. Aquino III, we are building a new direction, glad to know that our responsible and other social partners are with us along the right to path—"Tuwid na Daan sa Tapat na Paglilingkod."

Today, let us remain focused to the task of contributing to the achievement of our goal of a prosperous nation of a skilled workforce ready to engage the world.

Mabuhay ang DOLE!

ROSALINDA DIMAPILIS-BALDOZ
Secretary

DOLE wears reform hat on its 77th Anniversary

Secretary Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz with President Benigno S. Aquino III

When Secretary Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz presides over the 77th anniversary celebration of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) today, history could record her as the 6th labor and employment secretary to lead the DOLE at 77 years old and counting.

She is also the fifth female chief of the department, one of the few professional career officials who have risen from the ranks to become DOLE Secretary.

Her intimate current government agency—with which personnel manning all regional offices, 38 overseas posts, six bureaus, seven staff services, and attached agencies—that now go under as Filipino workers, and human resource families, look up to our labor and employment matters.

As DOLE chief, Secretary Baldoz is overseeing the implementation of the six-point labor and employment agenda of President Benigno S. Aquino III, and, thus, seeking to chart the DOLE in the next direction of the P-Noy administration whose overarching goal is to "invest in our country's top resource, our human resource, to make us more competitive and employable while promoting accelerated, more inclusive social justice."

Under the agenda's umbrella, Baldoz has outlined a package of reforms in the areas of employment facilitation, workers' welfare and protection, labor relations, and governance.

EMPLOYMENT FACILITATION

To facilitate employment, the DOLE has lined up the creation of up to 1 million temporary jobs, which aims to re-engineer the PhilJOBNet, the government portal for jobs search and skills matching, strengthen employment services through Antiterrorialization of Public Employment Service Offices (PESOs), provide Community delivery of labor market information, and enhance demand skills and occupations, to solve the jobs-skills mismatch problem, set up industry training boards to cover key industries, conduct job fairs and abroad. This reflects the TESDA's Training for Work Scholarship Program and Plus reflects for the Private Education Scholarship Fund for Technical-Vocational Education (PESFA).

In preparation for the National Summit on Labor and Employment in June, are sets who DOLE has hosted, already with consultations with the social partners participation in the formulation of the RPFEP 2011-2016 Labor and Employment Agenda (Decent Returns Generation) (DRG) Plus and the Philippine Jobs Plan.

The DOLE has likewise begun implementing the Emergency Employment Program (EEP) as an interim response, which adjusts for the plan to the next general appropriations act. EEP is in effect to temporary projects but have absorbed, which is expected to generate 1.000 million jobs. On the part of DOLE, it embraces to organize 1.5 million jobs fairs and to facilitate and create by building program funded at Php2 billion.

Other DOLE reform measures include the new programme on work-employment and migration, expansion of the web in overseas labor review (WEB) for seafarers problematic overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and other reserved of professional identification cards.

WORKERS' WELFARE AND PROTECTION

On key workers' welfare and protection, the DOLE has intensified its labor inspection and expanded its labor standards enforcement to include service contracts, contract jobs, night shift differential pay, service incentive pay, holiday pay, five other labor standards like payment of SSS and PHILHEALTH premiums, enrollment of child labor and labor-only contracting to regularization, and issuance of other employment permits. The goal is to increase compliance rate from 50 percent to 60 percent to 70 percent.

It has started a pioneering compliance certification system with the active participation of the National Tripartite Industrial Peace Council (NTIPC) which will issue certificates of labor standards compliance who approve companies submitted themselves to separate assessment.

The other reforms are the establishment of labor laws simplified laws and labor law compliant labor system of inspectors, wage reform towards the "two-tiered wage system", increased occupational safety and health awareness and expanded social protection under the DOLE integrated livelihood programs for land-off workers and workers with special concerns, namely, Integrated Services for Migrant Wage Workers (I-SERVE) for seafarer, Youth Entrepreneurship Support Program (YES) for graduates and graduating students of college or technical-vocational courses; Women Workers' Empowerment through Entrepreneurship Development (WEED); Kabuhayan sa Manggagawa Bulong Manggagawa (KaBaMa); Negosyo sa Kanayunan (Nego-Kan) for agricultural workers; and DOLE Integrated Livelihood (DIL) Assistance Kit for land-off workers and workers with special concerns and displaced wage workers and their families.

The DOLE is also implementing with sign expanded protection for migrant workers, as mandated by RA 10022. It has set aside P100 million for the OWWA Legal Assistance Fund (LIF) as per the services of a legal counsel and other litigation expenses awards.

It has redesigned the Repatriation Program to make it more responsive to the requirements of OFWs and their families.

The other reforms include the review of the Workplace Service Providers Reform Package; Feedback on Case Monitoring System; registration assessment, and interrogation assessment.

The DOLE continues to monitor trafficking program with task forces on illegal recruitment and trafficking already set up in Cebu, Clark, Laguna, and Zamboanga.

It is working for the ratification of seven international conventions among them the ILO Convention to Domestic Workers, Maritime Labor Convention, and ILO Convention 87, or the Fundamental Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention.

LABOR RELATIONS

On labor relations, as per the mandatory conciliation-mediation approach of all labor cases is now in place, following a series of initiatives social dialogues with social partners which have endorsed the reform. The reform seeks to provide a speedy, impartial, inexpensive, and accessible settlement service for unresolved grievances and complaints arising from employer-employee relations. Statistically, strikes have been on the wane, conciliate, and mediate all cases on procedural and regulatory.

Another reform that is gaining ground is the revitalization of Voluntary Tripartite Councils (VTCs) and establishment of Voluntary Codes of Conduct. Industry Practices. Volunteers refers to the broadband, education and business sectors and the Philippine Retailers Association, among others, and setting industries in the region have also been co-existing, developed VTCs and voluntary codes of good industry practices are expected to minimize disputes, boost government intervention, and enhance industry competitiveness.

The other reforms are inclusive tripartism and social dialogue, reinforced labor education program for workers and employers, simplified PRC case establishment proceedings, Project Speedy and Effective Disposition (SpeDi) of all labor cases, posting of names of labor cases in the DOLE website, establishment of technical and generic review of appeals, efficiency and integrity boards, and the continuing review of the Labor Code.

GOVERNANCE

DOLE reforms on governance focus on two areas: broadening public-private sector partnerships in human resource development, and re-alignment reforms to ensure prudent spending, eliminate red tape, strengthen integrity and accountability of all officials and personnel, reduce process time, of frontline services, and use of technology to upgrade service delivery.

On broadening public-private partnerships, reforms led to the forging of the DOLE and the Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce Partnership in the Jewel Big Winners; DOLE-IBP Partnership in Modernizing Employment; DOLE-TESDA Partnership in Labor Standards Enforcement; and the DOLE-PCCI Partnership in Employment Generation of Chambers and Industries (PEGIS Partnership in Labor Education.

The streamlined reforms the DOLE has started include zero-based budgeting, prudent spending, strict implementation of the Citizens' Charter, which complies with the mandated Sept. 30 and spells out the accountabilities of each DOLE office in terms of service, particularly public services with utmost integrity and efficiency, grade-response mechanism to citizen's feedback, posting of Statement of Assets and Liabilities of the DOLE website, ensuring integrity of PRC Examinees and one living announcer, strong advocacy against false professionals, and replication of the reforms at DOLE-NCR—the nation's capital—for lessons, and more cost-efficient transactions for professionals and customers.

"I am very optimistic and confident that these reforms, when they take root, will make a big impact in the lives of our people," said Secretary Baldoz in describing the reforms.

No magic in settling San Mig glass plant row in 7 days, just reform

"MAGIC WAND (I sweeps to stop problems)," beamed Labor Secretary Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz after he and his colleagues, San Miguel Yamamura Packaging Corporation, Inc. Manila-Alaba Plant (SMYPC-MAP), signed a collective agreement involving a problem for resumption of jurisdiction (CAJ) before the Office of the Secretary (OSEC) of the Department of Labor and Employment.

Secretary presided over the signing between SMYPC-Employees Union-Manila Alaba Plant (PEKWF) which, before the settlement, was locked in a bitter dispute over the union's demand for the reinstatement of 100 workers illegally sold property of the union must face a deadline to negotiations for a new collective bargaining agreement. It has filed a notice of strike on an August. The management filed a petition for CAJ.

In assuming jurisdiction, Secretary Baldoz quickly ordered former Labor Secretary Leonardo de Jesus to handle the case. Both parties have agreed to submit the case to the arbitration of the Secretary's assumption under a department order. Baldoz lauded today when the new DOLE undersecretary for labor relations is the secretary herself.

Labor de Jesus first conducted separate conciliation and mediation. But on solving the new field earlier suspended. It took them just seven days to agree to an agreement.

"What made the settlement quick was we both refuse to arbitrate and adjudicate—a last thing to do to point labor and employment agenda of President Benigno S. Aquino III," said de Jesus.

The reform, in particular, consists of new step efforts to explore all options for settlement. The agreement prohibiting any overtaking even though the case was pending before the DOLE.

"The parties have to see effort to resolve industrial peace in this country. By allowing people to the other measures of maximizing procedures, we can avoid red tape. Helping people to get quick solutions, fast and complete transparency in our work, we are working to achieve President Aquino's agenda of achieving integrity and fairness in the arbitration and adjudication system, particularly in settling disputes," Baldoz said.

San Miguel—SMC, a unit of the Ayala Corporation, similarly, is the country's largest packaging company and market leader in the production of glass bottles, cartons, and plastics—can for beverages, food, liquor and health care products. It has 11 manufacturing facilities, two of which is the Manila Plant.

"A disruption of its operation will affect an SMC and many non-SMC industries nationwide," said Ronaldo Puno, one of its management representatives who signed the settlement agreement.

The SMYPC-MAP, a unit of SMC, employs 1,000 workers. It is the country's largest packaging company and market leader in the production of glass bottles, cartons, and plastics—can for beverages, food, liquor and health care products. It has 11 manufacturing facilities, two of which is the Manila Plant.

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MORE HAN MEGEL GLASS PLANT ROW (SOMEC). The labor dispute at the Manila Glass Plant, a San Miguel Corporation subsidiary, was settled on 17 September 2012, with the signing of a new, three-year Collective Bargaining Agreement between the San Miguel Yamamura Packaging Specialties Inc. Employees Union-Manila Glass Plant (PEKWF-MAP) and the management of the San Miguel Yamamura Packaging Corporation-Manila Glass Plant. (Photo by Hector Santos) (JCE)

1.7M Pinoys use drugs, but number is declining

By Cynthia D. Balana

A TOTAL of 1.7 million Filipinos are illegal drugs, particularly the amphetamine-type stimulant "shabu" but the trend is on the decline, according to the latest narcotics report of the United Nations.

The 370-report entitled "2010 Toruma and Trends of Amphetamine-type Stimulants (ATS) and Other Drugs Asia and the Pacific" by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) showed a steady decline in the number of drug users in the Philippines from a high of 1.7 million in 2004 as reported by the DDB and the Philippine Drugs Enforcement Agency (PDEA).

The number of injecting drug users (IDUs) was estimated to be between 7,000 and 14,500 persons. The estimated HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) prevalence rate among IDUs was between 0-5%.

Widespread

The UN report, released in Tokyo, Japan, on Nov 25, said the illicit manufacturing, trafficking and use of ATS has become an increasingly widespread health and organized crime threat in Asia and the Pacific.

The report identified ATS as the drugs most widely abused in East and South-East Asia, displacing the use of traditional narcotics such as heroin, opium and cannabis (marijuana).

Between 3.4 million and 30.7 million people in the region have used amphetamines in the past year—a sizeable number of the estimated 14 million to 33 million global users.

The ATS are a group of substances comprised of synthetic stimulants including amphetamines, methamphetamine, methcathinone, and ecstasy-group substances (known as MDMA and its analogues). ATS are emerged in the Philippines in the late 1980s and swiftly changed the drug use patterns in the country, the report said.

Crystalline methamphetamine was the most commonly used drug for 62 percent of all users in the country.

"The situation related to methamphetamine in the Philippines appears to have improved compared to just a few years ago," the report added.

"Large-scale manufacture appears to be in decline and fewer people report recent use, being arrested and entering treatment facilities. Efforts of the Philippines' drug enforcement Agency (PDEA) have contributed to these positive results," the report said.

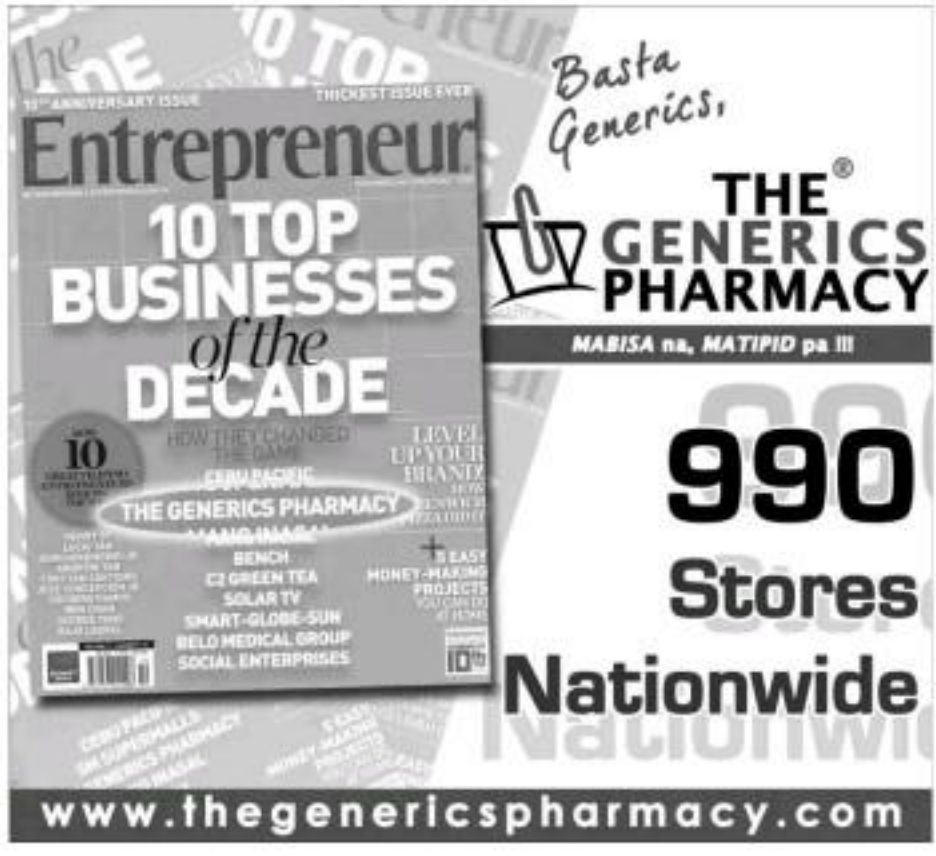
Snorting

Crystalline methamphetamine in the Philippines goes by the names "shabu," "ice," "shu," and "siopao." It is also known as shabu in Indonesia and Japan, "yaba" or "yama (bukli (injectable)" in Cambodia, "bindle" in China, "P" in New Zealand, and "ice" in Australia and Thailand. Snorting was indicated to be the primary mode of administration.

The Cannabis herb or marijuana was the second most commonly used drug in the Philippines, accounting for 38 percent of all drug users in the country in 2009 compared with 28 percent in the previous year. Before the emergence of ATS in the 1990s, cannabis was the most dominant drug of use.

Marijuana cultivation was prevalent in some areas of the country, particularly in the mountainous regions of the north and south, the report said.

On the other hand, ecstasy was identified as an emerging concern for drug law enforcement authorities. Ecstasy use was increasing among young nightclub goers in major cities but its use remains limited due to its high prices and low availability.



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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

War on truth

EDITORIAL

AS OF yesterday, no copy of the Supreme Court decision striking down the Truth Commission has yet been circulated, so what follows is based on the explanatory briefing by acting spokesperson Glory Guerrero—and on the record of this Arroyo Court.

For that, unfortunately, is what the Supreme Court under Chief Justice Renato Corona is turning out to be. When it comes to crucial cases seeking to hold Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo or her allies to the strictest account, the Court has established a pattern of always finding in favor of Arroyo or her political supporters (among whom, if we are to be true to the evidence of the last several years, we must count Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez).

It is possible that the Aquino administration has been ill-served by its lawyers; this latest setback, involving nothing less than the new administration's Executive Order No. 1, has started another round of finger-pointing in the direction of President Aquino's underwhelming legal counsel.

But that may be giving too much credit to the reasoning behind the Court's anti-accountability decisions. Guerrero (who confessed that she, too, had not seen the decision per se) told reporters that the 10 justices who voted to declare EO 1 unconstitutional found common ground in the principle of equal protection. "The majority, among others, held that EO 1 violates the equal protection clause of the Constitution in as much as it singles out for investigation the reports of graft and corruption in the previous administration." (The phrase "among others" refers to the reasons, the holdings, used in the decision, not to the majority who held them.) She added that the principle served as the "common ground in the opinions of the majority" (which suggests that there may be a number of separate, concurring opinions).

This argument seems reasonable, except that it is obviously a rationalization. Why? Because the very administration the Court majority seeks to protect may also be said to have violated that very principle, when it created the Hyatt 10 and Mike Defensor. By the Court's own logic, the subjects of those fact-finding bodies may be said to have been "singled out for investigation." If it wasn't a violation then, what makes it a violation now? Is the mere fact that officials of the previous administration are now the subjects of investigations outweigh enough to change the meaning of the act?

It bears repeating: The objective of the Truth Commission is to help build certain officials of the Arroyo administration accountable, by conducting fact-finding investigations. It bases its work in part on the previous work of other special fact-finding bodies, not just those created during the Arroyo era. We make no distinction between panels established by executive fiat as by legislation—because this principle of equal protection is not based on such a distinction. If it was legally valid to investigate hundreds of military personnel for possible complicity in attempted coups, it should be legally valid to investigate the dozens of officials implicated in the many scandals that characterized the last years of the Arroyo era.

(A layman may ask, to all innocence: If membership in the previous administration is used as the basis for invoking the principle, what is to stop, say, members of the Aquinos, family of Maguindanao from alleging that the mass murder charges against them are violative of the equal protection clause?)

The point is, the Truth Commission is meant to establish the truth of the many scandals, not to find all members of the previous administration guilty. We are happy to hear that the Aquino administration will appeal the ruling (from which five justices, including four appointed by Arroyo, dissented). But we also look forward to remedial measures, in case not enough members of the current majority will see the light to reverse the ruling. Because the electoral mandate of President Aquino is based precisely on his pledge to hold Arroyo and her allies to account, the new administration must be ready with alternative measures by which to meet the pledge.

This brings us to the worst aspect of the ruling: In its attempt to curtail what it says are excessive acts of the Executive, the Court commits the breathtaking mistake of exercising its own limbs, by substituting its own judgment for the clear mandate of the people.

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Erap on peace talks, other PH problems

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

FORMER PRESIDENT Joseph Estrada spoke out on the peace process in an interview last Sunday at his home on 94th Street in San Jose.

"We will never progress unless we have peace," he said. "Investors and tourists won't come here because of the peace and order situation, and we can say so much of our resources to fight this two-bit justice, resources that can be used to develop the country.

"If we have peace, we will save at least P46 billion a year. The soldiers can then be used to build roads, schools, health centers and other infrastructures," Erap said.

He reiterated the two peace talks between the National Democratic Front (NDF) and the Philippine government. "But there should be a timeframe for the peace talks. The same thing with the peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). We can't go on talking forever. The peace talks with the NDF have been going on for 20 years already. During that time, how many soldiers and civilians have been killed? How many children have left the two peace talks but, another 20 years? There should be a deadline to reach an agreement in the peace talks."

How long should the peace talks be?

"Six months to one year."

And if there is no agreement within the timeframe?

"Give it to us!" (Then it's war). All-out war na.

"The government should be negotiating from a position of strength," the former President said. "But as of now we can't even enforce our own laws in our land."

Erap said he almost won the war against the MILF. "We suffered only about eight armed [encounters]. Only 2,000 hectares in three provinces occupied by the MILF which is even following all rules when like passing through the highways issued, ironically, after the father of Nur Misuari, Habier Malik, issues a warrant of arrest for Misuari's capture."

But control President said that when Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo became president, she instructed Camp Abubakar to the MILF. Now all the soldiers and civilians, including some of those who participated in the Maguindanao massacre, take shelter in Camp Abubakar to evade prosecuting soldiers.

"Miss Ong-poon talks with the MILF midnight meeting tayo na dalaga pala sa'yo nasa marriage to hosts dun! GMA (grins) a pair ng tuli! Disadvantage to the MILF," Erap said. "But na lang (We were lucky) now the Supreme Court threw out the agreement with the MILF but the Philippines was almost dismembered. GMA couldn't even protect our territorial integrity."

Erap suspected that not only Malaysia but also the United States had a hand in the aborted memorandum of agreement between the Philippine government and the MILF.

"Why was the signing to be held in Malaysia? Why was US Ambassador Kristie Kenney there?" he asked. "Why was the scheduled signing not held Sulu? Where Kenney was ambassador here, she spent almost 60 percent of her time in Mindanao. Why?"

On the Mutiny Reform Agreement (MRA), Erap said that Gen. Danilo Lim (retired) had proposed to be only "shifting." "Just now the soldiers are here permanently," Erap said.

On the forthcoming resumed peace talks with the NDF and on the coming here of Luis Jalandoni for the negotiations, Erap asked: "What are we even talking with him? He is not a Filipino, he is a foreigner. He is already a Dutch citizen. Why are we allowing foreigners to dictate to us how to run our country? First Malaysians, then Norwegians, now Dutch. Even Filipinos—they're all telling us what to do. Doesn't the NDF have a Filipino citizen who can speak for it?"

Asked on his assessment of President Aquino, Erap replied: "Serious means well, but he should have more conservative secretary who has political savvy."

What are the country's most serious problems?

"Peace and order, that's number one. We can never go forward without peace. Then there is the utter administration of justice. Criminals are not afraid of the law if they know they can delay the wheels of justice. That encourages graft and corruption. Even if caught, grafters can continue to enjoy the fruits of corruption while the case appeals last (one) thing tired so already," Erap said.

What else?

"Equating Aquinos prevent development, they drive away investors and tourists; they deprive legitimate property owners of their properties. Obviously, the recent policies regarding squatting are faulty. They encourage, rather than discourage, squatters."

Anything else?

"Traffic, obviously! We cannot go on like this indefinitely. Whether on the streets or increasing by the hundreds every day, but there is hardly any increase in street being constructed. Where will you put all those vehicles? Not only the 2 million subsidized vehicles but also the cars/jeeps and the motorcycles that proliferate that on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City alone, there are two accidents involving motorcycles every day? The Manila mayor is doing the right thing by removing provisional buses and tricycles from the city's main streets; the subway system and the MRT should follow his example."

Erap was asked what advice he can give to his former protégé and 1998 chief foe, Freddie Lacson, on his bidding to reunite anew for the Davao-Cotabato meadow.

His reply: "I don't like to give him any advice."

What have to think of "open door"?

"I'll wait until some more details. Perhaps address has their foreign skins still remain closed to our own airlines. Tsk tsk tsk! Foreign airliners already have many seats open to them in the Philippines, but they are not bringing in any tourists. There is no demand for tickets from the same tourists are afraid to come here due to the peace and order situation. Have peace first, develop the tourist spots, make it easy for tourists to go there, and watch them come in droves. Their visa campaign is the most what there is a demand for more flights."

Release them

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

BE ASSURED, says presidential deputy spokesperson, Abigail Valte, that malacañang is studying the case of the Morong 43. It cannot as yet release them because their case is different from that of the military mutineers.

But of course their case is different from that of the military mutineers. They have more right to be released than the military mutineers.

Unlike the military mutineers, the Morong 43 are innocent. They are innocent because the law must then have presumption. They were arrested on the strength of a warrant against someone who has no fixed address and who is nowhere to be found—very likely a fictitious person. They were given no legal recourse, prevented not just from seeking any legal counsel but also from seeing relatives and friends, and thrown in the slammer for months. Some of them were probably tortured, at least they have claimed so. The group of pastors have been systematically denied their basic rights since 1986 other than those who have been summarily executed by the military, which is plenty.

Whatever has been found in their possession or extracted from them by way of confession is the "fruit of the poisonous tree," as lawyers put it, which is inadmissible evidence. And in any case, they have randomly stood by their cots in the dorm and explained that materialized in their persons were planted, and confirmed only in being so dedicated to their calling they were holding a medical seminar when swooped down upon by tokhang Macapagal-Arroyo's stormtroopers.

What is there to stand? Only by the government of Arroyo's arrest, Malacañang should have thrown their case out the window as soon as it welcomed a new tenant. If only for the ordeal they have endured—10 months and counting—Malacañang should have offered them its deepest apologies and treated locating the tyrant who brought them to that pass to justice.

Even if they are NPA sympathizers, or NPA themselves, what of it? At the very least, the mutineers themselves took up arms against government, even if as in the case of Danny Lim that key move is the driest and the wisest one, and they have been found, so much rejoicing by the military. Even Jose Tolliamo, who quite literally took up arms against GMA while she was still legitimate, has been freed, so much rejoicing by his family and friends. Why can't the Morong 43, who haven't even been proven to have taken up arms, be set? The selectiveness is patent and should be a reason of shame for government.

At the very most, whose case is really thorny and requires unremittable study?

Military officers are there to defend the economy, for which they get benefits and pensions and guns for the role they play. When they turn those guns against government, they do not just commit rebellion, they commit treason. They betray the very thing they are sworn to uphold. The only compelling justification in the case of Danny Lim is that they did not turn against a government that had no right to exist, that did not represent the citizens. They did so against a usurper, one who made fighting back a matter of self-preservation. The presidential amnesty given them naturally implies that justification, specifically the part about GMA's illegitimacy. Otherwise, nothing justifies it. Treason is unjustifiable.

It is great that the Morong 43 are 100% antipublicists, or 50% themselves, thus their case is far simpler and more forthright. They are rebels. They resort to fight government. Their sin is not party or privilege but doing so. On the contrary they suffer privations and are framed down to evil lows. Their added justification for fighting government over the law as ours is that it is a coup regime, wrought by ballot if not by ballot. For which they have paid the greatest price: Hundreds of their fellows have been killed or made to disappear; many like Jonas Burgos, judged, jailed and tortured without proof of their being NPA.

Incensed from first receipt of political prisoners, the second is far more easily pardonable. That is tacitly implied by the peace talks with the NDF. You do not negotiate with liars, you negotiate with rebels, or with people you consider to have principles. Yet the military mutineers have been released and the Morong 43 not so. Why so?

The only reason I can think of is that government doesn't want to piss off the military. That's what Whoopi's own brother, Cory, did at the 1986 and succeeded only in emboldening them to launch one coup after another. Isn't he Jean Pierre Emille who, in one of life's sublime ironies, or in one of this magic realist country's not to unusual twists, is now a staunch P-Noy ally. There's no other explanation for it, or easily nothing approximating legal or moral. It's just plain dirty politics.

It's also just plain injustice. Government has no business appeasing the military; it has every business punishing the military. Or those of them that helped GMA remain in role as vicious it made rebellion an act of grace. Of those of them that helped GMA remain in office after the Mitchaneo and propped up the civil facts vicious role of the Mapanabaw in Maguindanao to accomplish it. Or those of them that helped GMA dump out any and all restrictions against her, stranding rallies, arresting protesters, throwing a curfew and war operations of the State—from defined as the state of health of GMA and her husband, which buried hundreds of political activists, many of them at the hands of youth, in shallow graves. Or those of them that should even now be facing the Truth Commission in hell the couch about how they made a killing on pilferage from people like Jonas Burgos, disappear from the face of the earth.

What's to study? The outcome of no brainer is clear enough: Release the Morong 43.

And jail those that put them in jail.

Will my breasts blow up this airplane?

OXFORD—JUST when it seemed that America's "Homeland Security state" could not get more surreal, the US Transportation Security Administration has rolled out a costly hydra and chimera at major airports: either you accept dangerous doses of radiation and high-resolution imaging of your naked body, or, worried about the health risks of ionizing radiation, you opt out of the new full-body X-ray machines (rapidly dubbed "porno scanners").

But if you opt out, you are subjected, as I was last week, to an extraordinarily intensified intrusive "pat-down" by a TSA officer. It will soon be illegal for me to describe in any detail what the TSA official said to me when I flew out of New York's Kennedy Airport. And, sure enough, I experienced the excessive touching of genitals and breasts that is a new standard policy for US travelers.

More major handling of chest testicles and penises, TSA officials are instructed to open and pore down waistbands, and "tuchis to nose (the web release of frightened children) bring"—to describe it scrupulously—sexually molested, though this is the last thing most TSA officials understand.

Are you more terrified or ashamed or outraged? We are not. Passengers who have refused to be patted down on their genitals have been handcuffed in chairs. Such new terror alert or high-tech innovation, it seems, makes new demands on our liberty in the name of security. But travelers' worst experiences in the US also don't give security officials clear, where good reason to avoid implementing similar policies.

In fact, America's bizarre new policy is likely to **remain unique among airports in the industrial**ized countries, if not the entire world. Israeli security officials have been skeptical of partial pat downs, which they say accomplish nothing.

That is not exactly true. Twenty-five percent of **women have been sexually assaulted**, or molested by a trusted adult or childhood or adolescence—at least 17 percent of men. Many of these survivors will be in the TSA's line: some teenagers gauge their genitals. And children will be placed next at risk of profound negative effects.

WORLD VIEW
Naomi Wolf

State of sensitive educational outreach have finally made it the norm for American children to understand that their bodies are their own, that adults should not touch them intimately or in ways that make them uncomfortable, and that they can expect to be protected from such violation. By desensitizing children to sexually inappropriate touching, the pat-downs are destroying those hard-won gains.

It gets worse. TSA officials have been advised to tell small children that the sexual pat-downs are a game. To anyone who has ever consulted survivors of childhood sexual abuse, this should set off alarm bells: the most common ploy of sexual predators is to portray the abuse as a "game." As Ken Wooden of the organization Child Lures Prevention puts it: the TSA's "incredibly misinformed and misguided advice" is completely contrary to what we in the sexual abuse prevention field have been trying to accomplish for the past 30 years."

Americans, for years, are fighting back against this latent incidence of their rights. Two states, New Jersey and Idaho, recently introduced legislation to seek to opt out of the new policy. Questions about the change in practice have reached Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who admitted that she herself would resist a sexual pat-down, and President Barack Obama.

To what end is a policy that is appalling to citizens, damaging to children, and ineffective in improving our security? Welcome to America's current reality, in which threats are hyped so that a handful of insiders can make a killing.

Shortly after homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano announced the new policy, Chertoff made the rounds of TV shows arguing in favor of such measures to thwart "bad guys," one of his consulting firm's clients, Rapiscan, won the $350-million contract to provide the full-body X-ray machines. As one TSA supervisor said to me after my own sexualized pat down, "This is about [homeland]—people flying to cover their asses—and there is a ton of money involved as well."

Meanwhile, the supervisor continued—in his naive discussion by TSA employees—that work sex related to violent travelers are traumatized, too. One airing veterans said that he cries every day from the resistance and outcry he now faces from passengers, and that the stress is worse than being in combat. Others say that they feel they have been degraded and ashamed. Indeed, TSA workers are now working in a sexually hostile environment, which is illegal.

Finally, one must ask: Is there a psychological element to the US requirement of submission to genital groping by uniformed officials? It is impossible to forget the many images around certain of Arab administration policies, from forced nudity of prisoners—which post-Abu Ghraib recently drew new epidemic, not as observation—to the sexual torture and sexual assaults against such prisoners, the sexualized leering rituals and accounts of rape practiced with impunity by contractors, and so on.

I am not suggesting that sexually degrading practices are a conscious part of the TSA's new policy. But the history of erasing societies shows that nudity and forced or degrading sexualized practices—secretly, covertly—at once recently, part of the state's consolidation of power.

It is not too common to put this into context: billions of dollars in profit now depend on intellect like Chertoff maintaining US anxiety in a state of overhyped alert that demands increasingly nutty technology. Normalizing these profits requires a population conditioned by the theater of fear to submit to anything—even the sexual quasi-abuse of themselves and their children.

Project Syndicate

Naomi Wolf is a political author and social critic whose most recent book is "Give Me Liberty: A Handbook for American Revolutionaries."

Reading and the Net

ABOUT TWO weeks ago Smart sponsored a conference for university administrators and information technology staff on social media and education.

I spoke on the challenges posed for educational institutions by social media and during the open forum, one question that struck me was this: Since there have been studies on how young people are managing today with the Internet and other digital technologies in terms of the Internet's function.

PINOY KASI
Michael L. Tan

I answered that no, there are in fact published studies around this area, for example, looking at how the Net generation copes with multitasking (as in watching TV, surfing the Internet, listening to music . . . and doing homework). The studies do certify that there are limits to multi-tasking, and inefficiency suffering.

Flexible

The question did get me thinking more about the future of learning. In the Smart talk, I had noticed about the overly optimistic views sometimes presented about a "net generation" that is able to maximize the "Web 0's" of learning: learn, investigate, create, collaborate and communicate. The real issue is: How do you "have a generation of computer whiz kids who can intuitively find information for themselves, be critical in assessing it, and collaborate with others to create and disseminate (another "0") the information.

Many online evaluations in developed countries are questioning this view, pointing out that the 21st century picture there is: (1) a generation that is mostly unable to distinguish between fiction in developed countries, there is a digital divide, with less income young people not able to benefit from the Internet and computers.

But even among those who do have access to computers, there are studies demonstrating that there are problems with skills in using the Internet. Young people are not always able to know where to look for information, and in the ways where they find data (usually through sites like Wikipedia), they are not able to evaluate, much less interrogate, the quality of the data.

While much has been said about creativity and innovation, I am always impressed with students' visual presentations—screen publishers remain, much those like of text papers, when it comes to integrating and organizing the information. One Australian study found college students had problems even with storing the information in their computer, which means that they might end up with all kinds of files on their computer, but have difficulties retrieving when the need arises.

My take on all this is that the deficiency in skills that we see for the Internet go back to problems with handling print in general, and that takes us back to old fashioned print publishers. Some taken-known as books, but also including magazines and newspapers, you know, the kind you can hold, with pages you can flip.

I wasn't saying that flippantly some years back we had a UP student graduating with honors and in an interview with the bosses, he actually boasted about how he was able to get through college without ever entering the university library.

Just last week, I had to go to the library to get some information of our main library informed that problem, informing that although students pay P600 a semester as library fees, quite a high percentage (she didn't have exact figures) never bother to have their IDs validated with the library as they could borrow books. One faculty member at the assembly commented that was because the students were using the Internet.

The Internet, we should not forget, is just the latest platform for print, one of humanity's greatest discoveries. The emergence of written language systems (which has not happened, for many languages including several in the Philippines) was important to allow the storage and transmission of large amounts of cultural knowledge and skills, transcending space and time.

The printing press multiplied the potentials for this storage and transmission, but access to books and publications had many limitations. Just think of the location, with a print run of 100,000 (or hear the last time I checked) in a country with a population of more than 90 million.

On the Internet, however's breaking news can attract millions of hits in a day throughout the world. Computers and the Internet multiply the result of info learned in ways that defy our imagination. Yet, all said, without certain basic skills that come with reading books and print media, learning and knowledge will remain limited, if not distorted, because of the overload.

Navigate, negotiate

In my Smart talk, I proposed that in addition to the Five Rs of modern learning, one should add two: navigate and negotiate. These are actually much older skills that come with the book: books allow us to pause, to go back to an important point or to skip ahead. It allows us to the reflective, commenting on the margins, highlighting or underlining passages, or jotting notes.

There are advantages as well to old-fashioned note-taking, either by hand or into a keyboard, in the sense that you're internalizing the information in your brain, rather than just through mere reading. This disappears with the computer cut-and-paste function, where students merely skim through an article for passages they think the teacher wants to read, then cut and paste.

Navigating comes with reading. You see it even with very young children when you are reading to, as they insist on your staying on one page, or going back to an earlier one to refresh you to your fatigue, asking that the whole book be read again to them. Navigating is developing a certain cadence and rhythm with print. It's not as awkward that when you look at Internet volunteers reading to children, they seem almost like they're reciting.

The "negotiation" aspect means reflection, so crucial to what modern educators call "active learning." For many, think and evaluate your own progress. You're almost talking to the book. "Hmh, wait a minute, did you say that?" or "Can we go through that again?" but with a more engaged and critical tone. That's the real prospect here.

If we skip books and print, as has happened in the Philippines, the Internet becomes more like rough seas, users surge up rather than swim along. The problems are aggravated by the way many Filipinos grew up to—and are still attached to—television, which has created in short a dozen (unlike a book) where the main visual memory levels. None have any of watching television a translation to the Internet, surfing from one site to another, attracted by quick sound and visual bites rather than substance.

It does not have to be that way. Instances used to reading and reflecting on the page bring their style into the Internet and social media, more skips or scanning, zeroing in, discovering and picking out words and images, and then applying the lessons it's to acquire and share knowledge. Start our children as early as possible with books and newspapers. Reading books will give them the skills to further appreciate and benefit from the Internet.

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In the footsteps of Gandhi, Mandela, and Havel

WORLD VIEW
Ma Jian

LONDON—LIU Xiaobo, the imprisoned Chinese writer and human-rights campaigner, will receive the Nobel Peace Prize on Dec. 10. For the first time in history, however, neither the laureate nor any member of his immediate family will be present in Oslo to accept the award.

China's government has blocked Liu's wife, the newly released photographer Liu Xia, from participating by keeping her under virtual house arrest in Beijing. It has besieged his other relatives into boycotting the award ceremony.

Not surprisingly, Vladimir Putin's Russia was among the first to hammer on China's diktat. Many countries, including Iran, Cuba and all the Norwegian Nobel committee itself, might have to Beijing, too. But in the end it decided to go ahead with the award. That is only fitting, as award for moral courage ought not to be compromised by those offering it.

When the Nobel Peace Prize was last awarded this year's Nobel Peace Prize, his first reaction was telling. "This prize is given to the victims of the Tiananmen Square massacre," he said.

That simple statement neatly encapsulates Liu's peaceful, 20-year resistance to China's government's ruthless repression, which began in Tiananmen Square. Over the next two decades, he was imprisoned several times, and held under house arrest when not in prison. Despite this ongoing persecution, Liu continued to write and protest the government on behalf of the people of China. Like other Nobel Peace Prize laureates, fighters for modern times—Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, and Vaclav Havel—he sacrificed his own freedom to help **fight his people's lack of it.**

Today, many individuals and societies are democratically their support for the Nobel Peace Prize Committee's decision to award the prize to Liu. Indeed, there are a precious human, moral and economic. But Liu has shown that this is impossible. After Tiananmen Square, and he Liu Xiaobo if they choose to see through the lies of the regime's "Maoyuhuiwu Leninism."

But even here there is a paradox for the regime. For essentially, the ordinary men and women who have built modern China will demand to hear Liu's name commemorated without numerical achievements.

In a civilized China is emerging, just as a civilized Eastern Europe once emerged, from the hearts and minds of prisoners of conscience, of people like Liu Xiaobo. Havel, who has inspired Liu in his face-to-many others in regime-style prisons, wrote a public letter to Chinese President Hu Jintao after Liu's latest imprisonment. In it, he said: "Mr. Liu's trial was the result of a political order for which you carry ultimate political responsibility."

Just as Liu's authoritarian communist government was imprisoned Havel for daring to discuss civil society and a true constitution of liberty for his country, China's government has imprisoned Liu for attempting something similar, with his Charter 08 appeal, modeled on Czechoslovakia's Charter 77.

Havel eventually saw his ideas triumph in the Velvet Revolution of 1989. Liu Xiaobo is division awaiting more the unstoppable power of the powerless. Awarding him the Nobel Peace Prize lifts the hopes of all of us who dream of a truly free China. And we hope that one night also dream that next December, the Nobel committee will at long last recognize Havel for an award whose meaning he truly personified.

Project Syndicate

Ma Jian, a Chinese dissident and novelist, was awarded the Ackers Prize for Literature in 2008 for his novel "Beijing Coma."

History and Wikileaks

LOOKING BACK
Antoinette R. Gevantos

PUBLICATION REMINDER: SIX to wrap up my unfinished research on Read and the late 19th century, to begin work on Ferdinand Marcos. With Read the basic primary source material is available, in 25 volumes of his newspaper and scrapbooks. PROBLEM: the task is more challenging.

While he was president for only two decades, Marcos left a paper trail bigger and longer than Read's. There are newspapers, the official Gazette, photos, audio and video. Primary source material, since is Malacañang, was unfortunately dispersed or destroyed when a mob stormed the palace in 1986, scattering "treasures and pa" challenge for historians. Pictures and video of papers flying out the palace windows and being trampled by looters and souvenir hunters before the military secured the area make the archivist and historian weep. What was left? we might ask by the Ang Ayalas, ostensibly in safekeeping with personal mementos to drink to? history. A historian during the Marcos years will need a lifetime of research to write something definitive. Canada-itics and James Hamilton-Paterson have written engaging books on Marcos that give us the tip of the iceberg.

Long before Wikileaks came around, there was an NGO called the National Security Archive (NSA). The NSA compiled US State Department materials on Marcos and the Marcos years. To my knowledge, no current work on Marcos has relied on the enormous stacks of cables, reports and memoranda sitting in the US National Archives. Interviews with those Marcos from the time he was a neophyte congressman from Ilocos to the time he was called to Hawaii in 1986. For example, out many people, outside the PCOE, know that US Customs published a report on the "personal effects" brought to the United States by Marcos and his family consisting of everything they bought on the 60 days in the US the Save Save spree arrived. The astounding detail in this one report will make a historian think twice before embarking on Marcos. With heaven of the

That one model disappointed from unending pursuit. During Marcos' first US state visit, he requested that one of his war medals, the Purple Heart, be pinned on him in the White House by President Lyndon B. Johnson. US Defense Department did the staff work and reported that there are no record of this medal being conferred on Marcos who pinned it was pinned on him by Gen. Douglas MacArthur himself after the war. The compromise between the Defense and State Department's was that the medal be presented to Marcos in a box, in private, and not conferred as he happened in front of the cameras. Marcos medals became known in the US State Department long before American historian Alfred McCoy wrote extensively about shortly before the 1986 coup d'etat.

Most US official documents are declassified and opened to the public after 30 years, unless there are specifically extended. Most of the documents on Marcos were still classified at the time NSA requested to see them, not to indeed the President of Information Act and it was provided with copies of the requested documents, which had been given to the Philippine government. Many personal sensitive materials with black ink. NSA then mailed six months and requested the same document again. The document went through a different course who delayed sensitive passages here is without checking the previous request. Thus, by requesting the same document three or four times, we could compare what the NSA went around censorship and completed the document.

While the US State Department papers are an invaluable primary source on all our presidents from Emilio Aguinaldo to Gloria there are no outsiders' view, and we can only hope Philippine presidents, even those who are not publicly-minded for posterity. Now we wait for something entertaining on the Philippines from Wikileaks.

Comments are welcome in my facebook fan page.

Why stop only lotto draws?

LETTERS

THE PROPOSAL of Eastern Samar Rep. Ben Evardone and some of his colleagues in the House of Representatives to put a P100-million selling on the Grand Lotto 6/55 draw is unreasonable, to say the least. It is like changing the rules in the middle of a game.

Admittedly, allocating the amount in excess of P50 million to flood-control and infrastructure projects seems to be a laudable suggestion. But legislators are already supposed to earmark certain amounts from their huge pork barrel allocations for the same purpose.

I wonder if Evardone and his fellow legislators would agree to impose a limit on their pork barrel allocations like would effectively reduce by one half whatever amount they are receiving right now. By doing so, graft and corruption—which usually accompanies the disbursement of pork barrel funds...will be reduced, giving government more resources/funds for other worthwhile undertakings.

If the intention is to prevent money fiasco from developing a get-rich-quick mentality, the proponents of that measure is barking up the wrong tree. A casino is not the only gambling house. Eastern Samar noticed only the tree and not the forest, either.

To make the proposal as if betting is a game of chance is not a rational postulate among Filipinos from all walks of life.

Anyway, for instance, a considered illegal but still elusive in many parts of the country despite claims to the contrary by law enforcement agencies, as well as by government officials in the national and local levels, is cannot be denied that the existence of betting sleazy-time investments at low contributory rates to the ever-poor of urban Kalookan with the allocation of gambling among Filipinos living in rural and urban communities. Inc, he chose to single out the legislature issue drawn betting sanctioned by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) to promote control of unwanted vices.

If we were to follow Evardone's reasoning, then PCSO should stop conducting town fiestas and other games of chance under its auspices to raise donations. Even those must bear in mind that horse racing, cockfighting, jai-alai and casinos are also enticing the hot poker to gamble with their hard-earned money.

—RICARDO B. ABARCA JR.
rapadbar1959@yahoo.com

MORE people flock to a lotto outlet, hoping to win the jackpot after it breached P100M last November

Multi-draw scheme proposed for P100M+ lotto jackpots

I HAVE been blogging like a broken record, asking the same question, why the PCSO can't hold more than one drawwhen the grand prize reaches a gargantuan amount like P500 million. Maybe, a lesser-or-no-value will get the attention of the board members of this charity agency of government. If the prize money reaches the million-peso mark, the PCSO should hold monthly draws to replenish a single winner of any such milky, hard-to-fatally amount of money.

When the grand prize comes between P300 million and P499 million plus, hold **two draws**, dividing the pot by two draws; when it reaches between P500 million and P800 million plus, hold three draws; and when it floats between P900 million and P100 million plus, hold four draws, and so on and so forth. The allocation of prizes is computed mathematically by dividing the total prize of any draw between or among the winners. This means that granting the grand prize is P500-million, no one lotter can win that huge amount because it has been split by as many draws possible. The multi-draw scheme is not to be a winner-take-all.

The lottery with a multi-draw scheme is no guaranty to as many winners as possible. The more draws there are, the more possible happy winners, and the more happy winners, the more happy beneficiaries of the PCSO.

—JOSEPH D. PARACUL
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If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to The Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager numbers or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Poor taste in publishing gruesome photo

IN HIS "I SEE message of the photo showing Aurice Sarmiento Lota de Lima entering as a corpse during the Prosecutors League of the Philippines Invitational Shootfest held in Cavitex Batangas, Chairez City, with the caption head: "THE LADY CAN ALSO SHOOT" (Inquirer, 12/5/10).

I was very much disappointed to see that photo. It is definitely wrong with any one practicing target shooting is a living target for a public officials or a police or military officer to allow himself or herself to be photographed for publication or such scenes is a different story because a gun is made to kill person. And having a public official like Secretary De Lima in that photo was poor taste, to say the least. The photo gave a wrong, gruesome signal.

Because Secretary De Lima is a top justice official, the photo gives me dishearting message.

2. The gun makers will continue to be glorified and the victims of gun violence will continue to be shocked by Philippine society, notably the pro-gun administration headed by a pro-gun President Aquino, the merchants of death, the pro-guns, the criminals and those who believe in the panacea of the gun.

2. The picture that will be published by the editors has to be when the gun takes victims than when Claire gives hand on love, justice, reconciliation, inter-reconciliation and progressive dispensation.

3. Mission everyone, especially those who like violent movies, will learn to have a gun. Then will rise an era, modern Dracula, Ingrids, Secretary De Lima, Aquinos, judges, prosecutors and many more who think if you have a gun, people will not dare shoot you instantly for them behind. Even if you have a bodyguard, your enemy can find a way to shoot you.

4. A morning signal has been raised for all sons of guns will to unite in prayer and to promote by example Christ's peace, based on love, justice, reconciliation, social nonviolence and progressive dialectic there.

—REYNALDO "RAMON" PACHECO,
Sto. Niño Tagpuan ng Kapayapaan,
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Sue those behind anomalous SLEX, PPP deal

THE ESSENCE of public policy entertained by President Aquino is supposed to be directed to prospective PPP projects processed and implemented under procurement policies to be issued to requirement criteria.

Consequently, the provisions thereof do not (and) rights) act apply to projects entered into under previous policies, such as the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) for which user charges (rolls) deemed unjustified (etc to note).

The misdemeanors in the automatic public-to-motorist guide of PPP projects under the standard joint venture framework of unsolicited proposals during previous presidencies are all exceptable to my mind.

The SLEX, the subject of an ongoing controversy, should be reviewed in that light, and a settlement should for services be considered as an option.

The provisions of the SLEX contract appear to be severely disadvantageous to the users public, and considering that the franchise would run for some 30 years per contract recently introduced, a resolution is a difficult option for the Aquino presidency to consider.

Those in the government responsible for such farmers of public use should be re-admitted and made fully accountable.

—ALFREDO V. ARANCIBIA,
93 Cavite Blvd.,
Barangay Upsong Norte, Quezon City

PAMASKONG HANDOG NG PAGCOR 2010

LAUNCHING DATE: DECEMBER 8, 2010
AIRPORT CASINO FILIPINO

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WikiLeaks founder surrenders

From page A1

hundreds of secret US diplomatic cables. (See another story in The Wire, Page A2B.)

Assange was due at Westminster Magistrate's Court later Tuesday. If he challenges his extradition to Sweden, he will likely be remanded into UK custody or released on bail until another judge rules on whether to extradite him, a spokesperson for the extradition department said on customary conditions of anonymity.

Since beginning to release the diplomatic cables last week, WikiLeaks has seen its bank accounts canceled and its web sites smashed. The US government has launched a criminal investigation, saying the group has propagated US national security and diplomatic efforts around the world.

WikiLeaks has also seen an online army of supporters come to its aid, sending donations, fighting off computer attacks and setting up over 1500 mirror sites around the world to make sure that the secret documents are published regardless of what happens to Assange.

Legal troubles

The legal troubles for Assange, a 39-year-old Australian, stem from allegations leveled against him by two women he met in Sweden over the summer. Assange is accused of rape and sexual molestation in one case and of sexual molestation and unlawful coercion in another.

Assange denies the allegations, which his British attorney Mark Stephens says stem from a "dispute over consensual but unprotected sex."

Assange and Stephens have suggested the prosecution is being manipulated for political reasons — a claim that Swedish prosecutor Marianne Ny has rejected. Ny was not commenting on the Assange arrest until later Tuesday.

A spokesperson for WikiLeaks called Assange's arrest an attack on media freedom and said it won't prevent the organization from releasing more secret documents.

"This will not change our operation," Kristinn Hrafnsson told The Associated Press.

Insurance

But Hrafnsson also said the group had no plans at the moment to release the key to a heavily encrypted version of some of its most important documents — an "insurance" file that has been distributed to supporters in case of an emergency. AP

PAL union says 80 percent of workers vote to strike

From page A1

noh (Wednesday)," said Garry Rivera, president of the PAL Employees Association (Palea).

He added union report showed 80 percent in favor of the strike.

Rivera said votes coming from the company's provincial stations, such as Cagayan de Oro, Iloilo and Puerto Princesa cities, showed that 80 percent of union members favored the strike.

In the call center reservations at the PAL Building on Aurelio Avenue in Makati, an 84-percent turnout was reported, with 86 percent voting yes.

Palea has a membership of over 2,700, about 2,000 of whom are based in Manila.

Palace mediation

Malacañang had earlier advised Palea to wait for the result of its review of the Department of Labor and Employment's decision to uphold the validity of JSLI opin-off plans.

The airline, which has already swung its profits to the negative, has asked its employees to cut costs after suffering massive losses in the last two years.

In Pangasinan, President Aquino yesterday said he had ordered Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa to talk with both management and union to iron out differences following the strike vote.

"My understanding quite a few weeks ago was that they were already closer to resolving the issues," the President told reporters in Bani town, where he distributed titles to housing units for families displaced by typhoon Ondoy.

"If some issues had been some misunderstanding, things that should have been committed in the other party were not done. So (Ochoa) is taking care of that," he added.

PAL statement

In a statement, JSLI welcomed the presidential directive for Ochoa to mediate in the dispute.

"JSLI appreciates President Aquino's concern and desire to just closure to the PAL-Palea dispute," Carlo Villafuerte, the company spokesperson, said.

"Like the President, JSLI believes that the public deserves a quick resolution to this issue so as not to further cause anxiety to thousands of passengers who have already firmed up their holiday travel plans," she added.

The strike vote is the most recent in legal process leading to an actual work stoppage. Palea, which represents the bulk of the airline's rank-and-file employees, earlier filed a notice of strike in the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

Labor Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz

Doctors, bishops agree

From page A1

That life begins at fertilization runs one of the few "commonalities" found between the two groups at the first in a series of consultation meetings on the proposed measure held Monday at the PMA compound in Quezon City.

The PMA delegation was headed by Cacli, while the CBCP delegation was led by the secretary general, Msgr. Juanito Figueroa.

"We welcome these contributions to ensure of the impact of the RH issue on the nation," Cacli said in a statement sent to the bureau.

He said that during the meeting, the PMA through its specialty society—the Philippine Obstetrical and Gynecological Society—represented by its president, Dr. Sylvia Carmen, confirmed that "life begins during fertilization."

This stand is also shared by the CBCP, Cacli said. "The PMA is against abortion and so is the CBCP.

"We doctors took an oath to save and protect human life and that deliberately includes the child. No doubt the CBCP supports our stand on this," he said.

"Above all, we came to know that the PMA and CBCP found commonalities in this controversial issue," Cacli added.

He described the meeting as cordial.

No clear stand

But Cacli said the PMA, which counts 70,000 doctors as members, had yet to come up with a clear stand on the reproductive health bill, saying it preferred talking first to the protagonists in the debate before the group agreed on a stand.

He called on proponents of the bill to dialogue with the PMA to finish out issues relative to the bill. "We are also willing to talk to RH advocates. The time for argument is over, let's talk," he told reporters on Monday.

Cacli said the PMA was open to talking to representatives of the Department of Health, Department of Social Work and Development and Congress.

"We are very willing to provide our expertise to help with policy issues and the passage of good legislation," Cacli said.

Dialogue with Palace

Earlier the CBCP president, Bishop Nereo Odchimar, said the bishops would consult legal and medical experts to help them prepare for a dialogue with Malacañang on controversial issues that surround government efforts to shape a reproductive health policy.

Dr. Oscar Tesoro, PMA president, said the PMA would voluntarily offer its scientific and medical expertise on reproductive health to both the government and the Church.

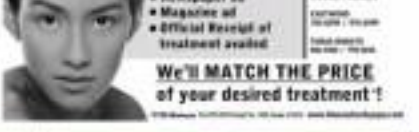
"Medical doctors are major stakeholders and from history in the reproductive health and wellness of our patients and we should be involved in any discussions concerning the issue," Tesoro said.

Tickish issue

Cacli acknowledged that the issue of abortion to save the life of the mother was still "a ticklish issue within the PMA."

He said the medical group was for the use of condoms to prevent HIV and AIDS but recognized that there were "pros and cons" on its use for birth control.

As a matter of protocol, some of the PMA members may prepare antidotal means of family planning to patients to give them "informed choices," with the final decision resting on the patient, according to Cacli. Reports *from* Cynthia D. Balana *and* Alexis Pupa



Assistant Editor Tony Hiergesia

Across the NATION

Clashes soil declaration of ceasefire

CLASHES between government soldiers and communist insurgents appeared to soil a truce that government and insurgent leaders declared to pave the way for a new round of peace negotiations aimed at bringing a peaceful end to one of the world's longest-running insurgency.

In Compostela Valley (Comval) and Bukidnon provinces, clashes continued between soldiers and insurgents only hours after a truce took effect. Violence was expected in the coming days prior to the Dec. 26-31 holiday of the truce.

The military said three rebels were killed in Comval in a gunfight preceding. Their bodies and firearms had been recovered, said Senior Supt. Aaron Aquino, Comval police chief.

Capt. Cyril Dawanan, civil-military officer of the army's 10th Infantry Battalion, said soldiers were on patrol when they encountered the insurgents.

Saturday's clash was the latest in a series of clashes between soldiers and insurgents in Comval since last month.

And over the weekend, soldiers and insurgents clashed leading to the death of an insurgent.

On Nov. 30, soldiers claimed killing six rebels in an hour-long gunfight in Maragusan town in Comval.

"We expect an escalation of hostilities," said Col. Roberto Ironstrom Jr., head of the 10001st Infantry Brigade.

Human rights group Karapatan said the military should probe the first attack in coming hostilities in Comval.

In Barobaras, a farmgate town, the military said soldiers captured an insurgent and killed two after a clash yesterday.

Maj. Harold Cabunoc, 9th Infantry Division spokesperson, identified the captured insurgent as Jason Boral, alias "Ka Butch," allegedly a ranking leader of the New People's Army from Comval to the 70.

He identified the slain insurgents as Ka Bona and a certain Joshua, supposedly members of the Celso Minguez Command operating in Davao.

A platoon of soldiers was on patrol past 5 a.m. yesterday when they chanced upon five insurgents led by Boral.

Boral, said Cabunoc, is in the custody of the 49th IB while the slain insurgents were brought to the town's funeral parlor, Inquirer Mindanao and Mac Arguelles and Juan Escandor Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

ISLAND PARK
One of the 100 islands in the Hundred Islands National Park in Alaminos City beckons with its cool breezes, clear water and natural rock formations.

Smuggling continues in GenSan, says mayor

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Smuggling continues undeterred here despite the flurry of coming inaugurations in Comval.

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Laguna gov pursues dredging, talks with China

SAN PEDRO, Laguna—Laguna Gov. E.R. Ejercito is exploring a partnership with the Chinese government and some private firms to pursue the dredging of Laguna Lake after President Aquino scrapped the P16.8B-lake dredging contract with a Belgian company.

"We are now talking with the People's Republic of China and are sapping investors," Ejercito told reporters by phone on Tuesday. But when asked to name the private firms he is talking with, he said the information is "confidential" at the moment.

Ejercito was determined and tagged as urgent the dredging of the 900,000-hectare freshwater body after it overflowed and flooded several lakeshore towns during Storms "Ondoy," "Pepeng" and "Basyang" last year.

"If that happens again, the national government is to blame. The national government is doing nothing," he said.

Malacañang in November issued a press statement saying that the contract with the Belgian Baggerwerken Decloedt en Zoon (BDC) has been terminated.

"There was no consultation with the provincial government," said the governor.

He said the lake currently has six meters of silt, reducing its holding capacity to just 2.3 meters.

He said he was pushing more for a five-point program to rehabilitate the lake, which includes dredging it. Dredging, according to its critics, is a source of corruption.

The program, he said, was designed with the help of solons' planner and architect Felino Palafox Jr.

He said the project would be in two stages with an estimated project cost of P20 billion per year. Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

CA deadline set for reply on ex-gov's plea on slays

By Marlon Ramos

THE COURT of Appeals (CA) denied the lawyers of some of the victims in the Maguindanao massacre to file comments on the petition of Zaldy Ampatuan to be excluded from the list of accused in the case.

The CA move came amid calls for the court to speed up the resolution of the petition filed by the detained former Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao governor.

Citing failure to comply with its previous orders, the CA ordered counsels of the 34 prosecution victims to submit their pleadings in five days after receiving a copy of the four-page resolution.

Unreasonable delay

"Any unreasonable delay designed to hamper the resolution of the ... case cannot and will not be tolerated," said the CA resolution dated Nov. 23.

Associate Justice Jhosep Lopez penned the resolution, which was concurred in by Associate Justices Noel Tijam and Marlene Gonzales-Sison.

The CA said the petition of Zaldy could not be resolved immediately because the heirs of 16 of the 58 victims have not filed their comments as required by the court.

The heirs of the 14 victims—Bienvenido Legarda, Andres Rocabero, Napoleon Sampang, Mac Dalmasi Belda, Saenen Sarcibalao Jr., Arturo Betia, Bay Montero, Noel Buenconsejo, Jose Jay Dalisay, Ainnie Ancanan, Julito Evarola, Daniel Tamanon, Victor Nuneza and Lito Quiapgan—were given a reasonable period of five days from receipt of the resolution to file their respective comments.

Submitted for resolution

"Upon the expiration of the said period and whether or not the said private respondents filed their comments, the case shall be considered submitted for immediate resolution," the CA said.

Justice Secretary Leila de Lima and the lawyers of Zaldy had asked the CA to act on the petition without delay.

Spokesperson R. Villanueva, Zaldy's lawyer, said his client's petition has been pending for five months now while his client has been in jail for 10 months.

"Further delay of this case results in more days suffered by petitioner," Villanueva said in an earlier interview.

He pointed to an April 14 resolution of the Department of Justice that ruled there was insufficient evidence to indict Zaldy.

Controversial ruling

There seeing Justice Secretary Alberto Agra has ordered Zaldy's exclusion from the case, but reversed himself following a howl of protest over his decision.

The initial ruling of Agra pointed to pieces of evidence—prison orders and cellphone billings—that showed Zaldy was in Davao City when the massacre was planned and executed.

Philippine Airlines had issued a certification that Zaldy took flight PR 811 on Nov. 20, 2009 from Manila to Davao City. The certification said Zaldy was in flight PR 812 from Davao City to Manila on Nov. 23, 2009, the day of the massacre.

He was also on flight PR 187 on Nov. 24 from Manila to Cotabato, according to the PAL document.

OFW group raises suspicion on insurance plan

LUCENA CITY—The overseas Filipino group Migrante International called on the Insurance Commission to make transparent its selection process in accrediting three big insurance providers in a new mandatory insurance coverage for overseas Filipino workers.

Garry Martinez, Migrante chair, noted that in the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 10022 or the amended Migrant Workers' Act, the Executive Commission was tasked with screening and selecting which insurance companies is servable as private partners for the implementation of the new policy.

"Something smells fishy in this new imposition," said Migrante in a statement posted on its website.

The group said the implementing rules and regulations for the insurance was delayed.

"Next thing we know, the POEA (Philippine Overseas Employment Administration) has released a memorandum ordering its implementation," said the group.

The quick accreditation of three insurance providers was assailed, said Martinez, because "not a single piece of information was given to the public on how they were screened and processed."

Martinez identified the three insurance firms, which were already accredited by the Insurance Commission, as Pioneer Life and General Insurance Corp., Philippine Charter Insurance Corp. and United Coconut Planter's Life Assurance Corp.

He said he feared the new policy will not only "milk" OFWs but will also be a source of corruption.

"The government will have to prove that the new policy is not a payback to the companies which backed their campaign during the last elections," he said.

Martinez said the group raised concern after learning that one of the accredited firms was involved in deploying 137 Filipino drivers to Dubai for non-existent jobs there. The drivers were forced to live on the streets and scrounge for food in garbage bins in order to survive.

The drivers signed OFW International Services and Placement Agency (OFW ISPA-Kuwait) as their recruiter.

Last year, the Senate committee on labor and employment headed by Senate President Pro Tempore Jinggoy Estrada investigated the case.

Apart from CFML, other companies that include Pioneer Life and General Insurance Corp., were also dragged into the case.

However, Paranaque had denied any role and said its only participation was to issue the guarantee bonds for each of the drivers who took out loans from Financial Institutions to leave for Dubai.

Under the Migrant Workers' Act, OFWs leaving for jobs abroad should be covered by insurance with a yearly premium of P75 each.

Migrant workers groups strongly protested the controversial insurance scheme saying it will further burden overseas workers and slashes recruitment agencies of any liability. Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

A day to inspire children, make them feel being loved

PR. EDDIE RIVILLO, the former governor of Pampanga, reads "Ang Huling Piano" to help children appreciate the value of caring for the environment.

By Inquirer Northern Luzon and Inquirer Central Luzon

A GRADE 3 pupil rushed inside the lunch box handed to him after the Inquirer's Read-Along session in Alaminos City on Saturday and asked, "Where's my book?"

It was already 11 a.m. when the session ended and the children, who had been at the Alaminos City library since 7 a.m., must be hungry as they lined up to receive their lunch, books and toys from the Inquirer's Read-Along sponsors.

But the animated way celebrity reader Barbie Salvador, Miriam ng Pilipinas Toastmaster International pitch, and professional story reader Percy Lapid presented the stories must have stirred such an interest among the 70 children who joined the session that the few available books and toys from the Inquirer's Read-Along sponsors.

The Read-Along team in Pangasinan was having lunch when a distraught-looking mother arrived and asked if anyone saw the envelope that contained her son's report card.

"He said he forgot to pick it up when we left. He is crying because it would be his first envelope," the mother said.

Fortunately, there were still books left and when the team handed her the envelope, the mother's tears lit up.

Inspiring children

Saturday was a good day to inspire children, even when rains almost spoiled the Inquirer's simultaneous Read-Along sessions in Binmaley, one where the bright sun that greeted Pangasinan and Tarlac (the biggest drowning the Christmas chill in Baguio City.

These places hosted the Inquirer Northern Luzon and Inquirer Central Luzon logo of the 25 simultaneous Read-Along sessions in line with the newspaper's 25th anniversary tomorrow.

Some 400 children, including those under the care of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in Pangasinan and Cordillera, joined the sessions held at SM malls in the cities of Baguio, San Fernando and Tarlac and in other venues in Alaminos City and Bauo, Binmaley. The activity was cosponsored by SM, McDonald's, Shell and Mind Publishing.

Stories about caring for the environment, health and community empowerment were read to the children.

In Baguio, before reading Isaac Asimov's "When Time Came to Town" to 125 Aeneas pupils, Bauo Mayor Domenian Bautista sang "I Am the Rainbow," stating at its conclusion that "God promised that He will never take love through great floods like what [had] happened during Noah's time, [and] that is why He gave us the rainbow."

The story tells about a strange man who changed a gray, colorless community filled with dust, by teaching children to clean up the town. Green popcorn of every part of the village that is scattered all dust and grime.

Adalberth Jones, a professional storyteller, read "Big Motivating Mouth (The Big Chicken)" and "Big Magic Stick at (The Magic Chair of Time)" which explore how children may overcome their weaknesses.

Annie Choi Ajuda, a 7-year-old pupil of Irene Elementary School said, "I liked the story of Motivating Mouth because it motivated someone to use his mouth to stand on our own two feet and children must listen to their parents so they grow up to become good people."

In Baguio, guest readers Charles Pangilan, a researcher in the mental and neuroscience unit in 2010, and lawyer Anna Theresa Liwanag, the Binhiraing Pilipinas-Universal of Salvador read "Ang Huling Piano (The Last Piano)," a story about how young children saved the remaining mango tree in their city. The story was written by Richard Reynante and illustrated by Arnold Nocetito.

A communications anthropology management graduate from Ateneo de Manila University, Salvador urged the children to "tend to learn and widen your knowledge."

"You should read about so you can also practice the right pronunciation of the words," she said.

The children also listened to Gapuz who read "When Flowers Blossomed," a story about how a sleepy town came to life after a new teacher who loves flowers arrived. The teacher, named Hilagang, inspired her students and the entire community to start a garden in their yards.

The story, written by Grace Chong and illustrated by Isolt Nemesha Dorotheo, awakened the town, which bloomed not only with flowers but with many home-grown industries.

City employee Venus Balgoa said her children, Lovi Anne, 11, and Rafael Sean, 7, woke up earlier than if it was a lecturer. "They were so excited they woke up earlier than I and reminded me of the activity," Balgoa said.

But they were more than participants. Before the other children started, they helped Jaeja Kim Bruno, 12, one of the employees Ilocano drama, in blowing the balloons used to create a festive atmosphere at the city library.

Animated Among Ed

In Pampanga, Fr. Eddie "Among Ed" Panlilio, a former governor, dressed himself from a medieval minstrel in his Tarlac town, to join the Read-Along session at SM City Pampanga in the City of San Fernando.

Panlilio sat outside the story area as he could read the story "Ang Huling Piano" before he read it to the 84 children under the care of the DSWD Reception and Study Center for Children (RSCC).

Andy Alviz, executive director and creative director of the Inquirer Read-Along session, wore a red hat for the session. "I feel like Santa Claus today," he said.

When Panlilio began reading the story, his voice boomed, his hands moving. The children's eyes were fixed on him, especially in that part where the character is to get a gift and a rabbit wear a white blanket over them to approximate a moving ghost. They laughed when the man with the scrum out scared.

Alviz read a story written by Inquirer correspondent Tarcisio Ortiz, entitled "Nakit Pinatuyo Ng Buhangin Pinatubo (Why Mt. Pinatubo Erupted)."

Trying to visualize how magma goes up—which leads a volcano to erupt, Alviz shook hard a sealed bottle of cola and squeezed to say, creating a mild shower.

Judging by the screams of the children during the question-answer portion, there was no doubt that Panlilio and Alviz got their stories across.

Narcisa Urlanes, coordinator of the RSCC, was teary-eyed as she described how the abandoned children under her participated. "The Inquirer made these kids feel they are loved," she said.

Juliet Getubalin, Haseen Gabreza, Rolando Sotelo, Russell Avanier and Emelie Dreyas

Pocket Open Skies:

Calling for a Fair Deal, not a "toothless" exercise

The Philippines needs safeguards to ensure effectiveness and substantive value:

- Any grant of air traffic entitlements must be reciprocal.
- Entitlements to be granted must be only for operations between an airline's home state and the Philippines, not between the Philippines and a third country (a.k.a. 5th/6th/7th freedom rights) unless Philippine carriers are able to obtain the same market access opportunities.
- Only foreign airlines which have used or nearly exhausted their existing entitlements granted under bilateral air agreements could be given more entitlements. Priority should be given to the utilization of existing entitlements, of which there are reportedly millions of unused seat capacities available (as cited during recent congressional hearings).
- Entitlements may only be granted to airlines of countries that have not imposed any trade restrictions in recent years that affect Philippine air carriers, e.g., no operating bans/blacklists or downgradings of safety/security status; no reports of governments denying applications by Philippine carriers without reasonable basis; no reports of discrimination in market access between Philippines vs. foreign airlines.
- If, after two years of operation, it is demonstrated that tourist arrivals from a foreign airline's home state have not increased by more than 50% overall, or by numbers equivalent to least 60% of the additional air seat capacity introduced by the grantee airline, then the granted entitlements shall be suspended. If the granted entitlements were incorporated into a bilateral aviation agreement, then such agreement shall be abrogated unilaterally by the Philippines.
- "Pocket open skies" should have as its key underlying principle, the Constitutional provision (Article XII, Section 10) that: "In the grant of rights, privileges, and concessions covering the national economy and patrimony, the State shall give preference to qualified Filipinos."; as well as the provision (Article XII, Section 12) that: "The State shall promote the preferential use of Filipino labor, domestic materials and locally produced goods, and adopt measures that help make them competitive".
- Any grant of entitlements must not adversely affect Filipino jobs in the Philippine aviation industry, or lead to the loss of labor rights and privileges for Filipinos.
- Any grant of entitlements must ensure that equal, if not preferential, privileges are given to airline companies in which Filipinos make up the majority of their total labor force.
- Due diligence must be undertaken to avoid having foreign airlines with dummy operations in the Philippines, i.e., using the name and identity of a Philippine air carrier to operate a service to, from or within the Philippines, while the substantive portion of its business is conducted from a foreign country by a labor force and management team composed largely of non-Filipinos.
- "Pocket open skies" require that national and/or local governments prioritize the development of airport infrastructure to support the targeted increase in tourism and ensure maximum adherence to safety and public convenience. Such as:
  1. Construction of a full-fledged international terminal at Clark with multiple airbridge gates, along with a second runway to allow for parallel take-offs and landings (the existing second runway at Clark, which is too close to the first runway, must be converted to a taxiway instead), and of such length as to allow for take-offs of Airbus A380 and Boeing 747-400 and B747-8 long-range aircraft at full payload.
  2. Construction of high-speed rail and road access linking the Clark terminal directly to the population centers in Metro Manila and nearby provinces.
  3. Construction of new airport and terminal facilities in Bohol, Aklan province, Palawan, Bicol and other key tourist destinations.

Our country's unbridled 'open skies' policy is neither fair nor balanced for the local aviation industry in particular and the national economy in general. What FairTrade is pushing for is a "calibrated and step-by-step liberalization" of the industry, a liberalization process supportive of the modernization and expansion of the domestic aviation and ancillary industries based on thorough assessment of existing air agreements and within the framework of an Omnibus Aviation Industry Development Plan - not a sweeping and mindless liberalization, much less surrender of our options and national interest.

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from:

GALEO
EQUIPMENT AND MINING COMPANY, INC.

'GMA is untouchable,' SC ruling seems to say

From page A1

Cruz and President Aquino had only lemonade and tea adverse to Manio for the defeats in the Supreme Court.

"We better redouble his Cabinet and get able ones. I pity them. They're very incompetent," the speaker said. "All these ministers are become he has very poor advisers among his Cabinet members."

Cruz added: "The reason did not know what it was supposed to do with the trash commission and neither did it know how he is would get."

"By declaring the truth commission unconstitutional, the Supreme Court has declared (Arroyo) untouchable," activist priest Robert Reyes said. "It's like saying that you can't do anything with Arroyo as long as supporters of the truth are considered criminals with her."

"The Supreme Court might have unwittingly won coverage for abuses and corruption under the Arroyo (administration) should not be investigated," said Gloria Francisco Magallanes.

"No effect on the public mind is that it interferes like, therapy from the scandals and her involvement in anomalies and abuses in government," Pough-non said.

"The law time I checked, GMA was no longer President and the practice of suppressing the truth as state policy ended with her. The Supreme Court ruling preventing the government from investigating the current president's cronies no way to prevent and think," the senator said in a text message.

WHAT WENT BEFORE: Aquino's first order of business

CAMPAIGNING in March, Sen. Benigno Aquino III said that one of his first acts if elected president would be to form a commission that would "investigate the various scandals that had engulfed President Macapagal-Arroyo."

A day before his inauguration on June 30, Aquino announced that he wanted to send Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. to head the five-member body that would "put the nuts to many issues."

On July 20, Sh. Aquino signed Executive Order No. 1 creating the "Philippine Truth Commission of 2010," which will "investigate reports of graft and corruption of such scale and magnitude that shock and offend the moral and ethical sensibilities of the people."

Chaired by Davide, the "independent collegial body" was empowered to obtain information and documents from the Senate, the House of Representatives and the courts in connection with corruption cases filed before them.

The body was also vested with powers to subpoena respondents, but could only make recommendations to the President, Congress and the Ombudsman.

Apart from graft and corruption, the body could also look into the "Hello Garci" elections cheating scandal of 2004.

On Aug. 12, Arroyo allies in the House of Representatives asked the Supreme Court to nullify the order, saying it was not only "unconstitutional and invalid" but also "an usurpation by judicial authority" of the function for contempt and prohibition. Representatives Edcel Lagman, Rodolfo Albano, Simeon Datumanong and Orlando Fua said the executive order violated the moral and ethical sensibilities of the people's separation of powers."

Redundant rigodon

They said only Congress had the power to create government offices, agencies and commissions. They added that the body's function was similar to those of the Office of the Ombudsman and the Department of Justice, and described it "as a redundant rigodon."

The respondents named Executive Secretary Eduardo Ochoa Jr. and Budget Secretary Florencio Abad as respondents.

On Aug. 17, the high tribunal refused to issue a temporary restraining order but instead set the case for oral arguments on the case on Sept. 7.

Despite unresolved issues, the Philippine Truth Commission opened on Oct. 18 and formally interviewed its other members retired Supreme Court Justices Ramon Gallego Jr. and Florida Hilbay Romero, and former law school professors Carlos Medina and Manuel Quezon.

As of October, the body had gathered a box full of documentary evidence pertaining to at least 10 cases of alleged large-scale graft and corruption involving the Arroyo administration. — *Inquirer Research*

— *Source: Inquirer Archives*

"How can there be a violation of equal protection when she is in a class by herself? How could she claim she will be violated," he said. "I don't think the Truth Commission can be invalidated on that ground."

Allies of Arroyo, now a representative of her home province in Pampanga, welcomed the court ruling.

House Minority Leader Edcel Lagman said the decision was "a signal triumph of the rule of law."

In effect, he said, the ruling "struck down unanimous of the President into the realm of legality, subject to authority and protected the posterity of civil liberties against governmental delinquencies."

At least dissident comment.

But her brother-in-law, Negros Occidental Rep. Ignacio Arroyo, said: "Why did they file a case and waste the people's money? The courts were established to things like this. Not only it is redundant but the commission can be ended by their own agenda."

Prudence urged

Magistrates-turn Rep. Simeon Datumanong, one of the petitioners, welcomed the ruling as "a reassurance people that indeed the Supreme Court is the guardian of the Constitution."

Datumanong, Sha. Mikagrios Magsaysay said this was a lesson for Malacañang "to exercise prudence in its actions and decision-making so as not to suffer setbacks."

Malacañan Rep. Rabi Bag-ao said: "The commission will just investigate, so no rights are at stake. The DOJ (legal prosecution of Arroyo) will continue with its investigation, Guerra said: "I can't speculate for them because some of their members are justices of the Supreme Court, so they owe a former chief justice."

She was referring to retired Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

"I will leave it to them what legal avenues they can consider," Guerra said.

Setback

The ruling was a setback to the efforts of Mr. Aquino, who took office in June, to bring his predecessor and rival to account for alleged massive graft and election cheating during her more than nine years in power.

During her terms, President Arroyo presided impressive over the issue, thanks largely to her control of Congress.

She was required by constitutional term limits to step down in June, although she was elected in May's national elections as congresswoman and continues to wield strong political influence. — With a report from AFP

SC leaks own ruling: Truth commission illegal

From page A1

nounce. Louis Biraogo had filed their separate opposition to the Palace move against Arroyo in August, naming Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa and Budget Secretary Florencio Abad as respondents.

Partisan hostility

The petitioners argued that the truth commission was not only "unconstitutional and invalid" but also "an enterprise in partisan hostility."

As of late last night, no decision had yet been issued, Guerra said, adding there were several separate concurring and dissenting opinions.

At news of the ruling rumi spread like wildfire as many people, including Guerra said that she was given a quick briefing by Chief Justice Renato Corona on the outcome of the vote and the main points of the decision.

The majority vote consisted of Corona and Associate Justices Presbitero Velasco Jr., Teresita Leonardo-de Castro, Arturo Brion, Diosdado Peralta, Lucas Bersamin, Mariano del Castillo, Martin Villarama Jr., Jose Perez and Jose Mendoza.

The dissenters were Associate Justices Antonio Carpio, Conchita Carpio Morales, Roberto Abad and Ma. Lourdes Sereno.

Arroyo count

Except for Sereno, all the justices appointed cases of Arroyo. Sereno was the first appointee of Sh. Aquino in the high court.

Guerra said the poll could not cite the other grounds for the nullification of EO 1 or the reasons of the five justices for dissenting.

She said the decision was not yet final and that the respondents had 15 days to file a motion for reconsideration.

Asked if the truth commission could still proceed with its investigation, Guerra said: "I can't speculate for them because some of their members are justices of the Supreme Court, so they owe a former chief justice."

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How SC voted

Unconstitutional
Chief Justice Renato Corona
Presbitero Velasco Jr.
Teresita Leonardo-de Castro
Arturo Brion
Diosdado Peralta
Lucas Bersamin
Mariano del Castillo
Martin Villarama Jr.
Jose Perez
Jose Mendoza

Dissenters
Antonio Carpio
Conchita Carpio Morales
Roberto Abad
Ma. Lourdes Sereno

'You cannot stop the truth from coming out'

From page A1

by the court spoke-person were enough to ground the junket.

He said he provided inputs in the creation of the commission that were not harnessed by Malacañang in President Aquino's executive order. He said they are mid-nature like the powers to be exercised by the panel.

"We are very disappointed," Sheilan said of the decision in a telephone interview.

He said he would like to know what the court meant when it cited "overlapping" functions of the commission.

"The truth commission has a different focus. There are many objectives which can be addressed once the commission actually operates."

50 complaints

Sheilan said that as of yesterday, the commission had received more than 50 complaints about anomalies and abuses of government officials.

The Department of National Defense (DND) chose not to use the Supreme Court ruling as a setback.

"We don't see it as a constraint. We can go on to pursue reforms and go after abuses perpetrated even without the truth commission. It's the guiding policy laid out by the President and the secretary of national defense table or until the truth commission," DND spokesperson Edmundo Claver said.

Among the main unresolved issues against the past administration is the 2005 "Hello Garci" scandal that alleged that Arroyo colluded with certain ranking military officials to rig the 2004 presidential election.

Former Senator are other agencies that can look into the "Hello Garci" election cheating scandal.

"I'm sure there will be people who will look into this," he said.

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile blamed the former justices in the truth commission for failing to provide Mr. Aquino sound legal advice.

"You cannot fault the President because he is not a lawyer. It should have been boards and bureaucrats and agencies appointed those who should have studied the enabling act then to avoid any problems," Enrile said.

He said Malacañang should also consider strengthening its legal staff to "have the best legal advice because his aides had broad legal implications.

Enrile said Congress, and not the President, should have been tasked to create the truth commission as the office was not constitutional to allocate a budgets for the body and it lacked the prosecutorial powers of the Department of Justice and the Office of the Ombudsman.

Enrile said the truth commission was doomed because it could not force people to testify against themselves and it should have not focused on corruption in a single administration.

Not beholden to GMA

While almost of all the Supreme Court justices were Arroyo appointees, Enrile said he did not think that they were beholden to her.

"They have rendered this decision based on their belief that that is the correct rule to be followed," he said.

Enrile advised Malacañang not to file a motion for reconsideration for the creation of a single-featured commission because it will come in the high tribunal would be too hard to reverse.

Sen. Franklin Drilon said: "Clearly, this decision is one of the many legal obstacles laid down by the Arroyo administration to prevent the former administration from being held accountable to answer to the Filipino people for all her sins."

"How can there be a violation of equal protection when she is in a class by herself? How could she claim she will be violated," he said. "I don't think the Truth Commission can be invalidated on that ground."

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Catfight erupts over hunt for Ping: Rosebud vs Sandra

From page A1

manhunt since February after he was charged with double murder in the 2000 killings of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito.

Interviewed on Monday night, Sam said Ong had no business talking about the case as she was "not appointed spokesman" by the Dacer family.

"The reason why I am angry is that every time there is an issue against Ping, she keeps jabbering when she is not needed here," Sam said in Filipino.

'True whistle-blowers'

Sam admitted she felt hurt that Ong was enjoying her time under the witness protection program as a witness against Larson while "true whistle-blowers" like her had not been given protection.

She claimed Ong had been indulging in golf games and ballroom dancing.

Sam, a Senate witness in its investigations on the illegal numbers racket, said Larson had provided her and other whistle-blowers "temporary security" when their lives were in danger.

She added: "My call is for the Ong to find the truth."

Quoting the Bible's proverbs, Sam claimed she delivered "piercing" payoffs to members of the family of then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, namely her son, then Rep. Mikey Arroyo, and her brothers-in-law, Rep. Iggy Arroyo. The Arroyos denied the charge.

In a separate interview, Ong said: "I am very educated and do not want to disagree myself in a public bickering with Sandra. I respect her for what she has done."

'My duty'

Ong said the arrest of Larson was her priority concern.

"He is the principal respondent in the cases filed in court where I am a primary witness. It is my duty to go after him so we can have left to escort," she said.

Ong is a state witness in a double murder case filed by the Interior Department in 2000 against Larson.

Ong said she had not requested for the witness protection program for herself and her children in connection with the case.

"I am a government witness, no matter who is the president sitting," Ong said. "She is a whistle-blower riding on principle."

Malacañang yesterday said the fugitive ex-Philippine Air Force colonel could be out of the country.

Presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda also told reporters there was "no reason" to replace NBI Director Magtanggol Gatdula, who once served under Larson when they were both with the Philippine National Police.

With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Marga C. Cayapot

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Aplus METRO
Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

DID YOU KNOW

TAGUIG became a highly urbanized city on Dec. 8, 2004, as a result of the inclusion of the cities of Pateros and parts of the city previously held in 1998.
Batas Pambansa Blg. 79 and Batas Pambansa Blg. 643, Research

Teenager killed, 6 hurt as train rams taxi cab

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A TEENAGER was killed while six were wounded, including three young orphaned siblings, when the taxi cab they were riding in was hit by a Philippine National Railways (PNR) train in Manila yesterday morning.

SFSDC BSA TWIN TOWERS: A SPACIOUS LIVING AWAITS

BSA Twin Towers located at St. Francis Square between SM Megamall and The Podium — Spacious living room and dining area can be yours at BSA Twin Towers, unrivaled to be the Tallest Twin Towers in the country as certified by the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH), USA. Excellent architects and interior designers including National Artist and Father of Philippine landscaping, Arch. IP Santos, constitute BSA Twin Towers' array of consultants. With construction progress already at 86%, RAKIT is ready for move-in by December 2011! Units for sale can either be bare or fully-furnished, with only top of the line furniture and accessories provided should clients opt to have their units fully-furnished. Flexi payment schemes and rent-to-own financing through SCPB are available, so visit our model units now! Contact us at 636-2368 or 632-1616 for more inquiries.

MMDA: 'Christmas lanes' ready for motorists

By Tina G. Santos

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority (MMDA) yesterday announced that it had cleared of road obstructions more than 50 percent of the designated "Christmas lanes" for the convenience of motorists looking for alternative routes to drive.

At the same time, the MMDA clarified that motorists who use the Christmas lanes would not be exempted from the Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program or the number coding scheme.

According to MMDA Chair Francis Tolentino, the Department of Public Works and Highways had also repaired and resurfaced some of the roads designated as Christmas lanes to ensure smooth traffic flow.

He cited the removal of cones to, inside on the Roxas Boulevard service roads, particularly in front of Aloha Hotel all the way to T. M. Kalaw Avenue to widen the road.

Tolentino said signs have already been put up by our Traffic Engineering Center to guide the drivers using these routes and we have also deployed an appropriate number of traffic enforcers to these areas," Tolentino said.

The Christmas lanes were announced by the MMDA early last week in line with its continuous efforts to decongest Edsa, particularly during the Christmas season when traffic is considerably heavy.

Tolentino urged private motorists to try using the alternate routes and avoid traveling on Edsa, especially during rush hours.

The truck comprising the Orthomax lanes can be viewed at the agency's website (www.mmda.gov.ph).

Meanwhile, Tolentino asked the public on some safety measures during the holiday season when road accident fatalities commonly occur.

"Avoid drunk driving. Most of the people involved in accidents during the season are drivers driving under the influence of alcohol, particularly those coming from Christmas parties," he said.

He also encouraged carpooling among officemates and friends around, ing parties to minimize road mishaps during the holidays.

Teenager killed, 6 hurt as train rams taxi cab

PEOPLE gather around a taxi cab which was hit by a train in Pandacan, Manila. The accident left a teenager dead and four fare companions injured. (Jonas de Luzuriaga)

From page A15

Traffic investigators said the driver of the San and Dila taxi cab (TXR 467) ignored the crossing guard's warning for him to stop and tried to beat the train in crossing the rail tracks at the corner of Lanuza and Dr. Carlos Sevaso in Pandacan.

"The train directly hit the taxi and pushed it on the tracks for five meters," traffic investigator SPO1 Angelo Macaraig of the Manila Police District said.

Medics of the Philippine National Red Cross who rushed to the scene pulled the victims out of the wreckage and rushed them to Capitol Medical Center.

Doctors declared Gemma Reyes, 17, a ward of White Cross Children's Home at 167 Sanchez Rd. in San Juan City, dead on arrival. Her companions, also wards of the home, Rachel Lazaro, 8; Donalyn Lozano, 14; and Regine Lozano, 12, social workers Cherry Jean Castillo, 26; and Sheila Mae dela Cruz, 22, ... received treatment for the injuries they sustained in the accident, along with the cab driver Dionisio Pajarillo, 60.

Based on initial reports, the group was headed for the Department of foreign affairs to arrange the children's documents for their trip abroad for a meeting with their prospective adoptive parents.

The taxi driver, however, told the police that the group had asked him to take them to La Concordia College.

The accident took place at around 7 a.m. yesterday. The taxi had just turned left on Dr. Carlos Sevaso when the oncoming Iriorgen, Jonathan Castillo, signaled the taxi driver to stop to make way for an Alabang-bound PNR train.

But instead of stopping, the taxi driver tried to beat the train in crossing the intersection, Castillo told the police.

The train slammed into the side of the taxi cab, pushed it for several meters along the tracks before it came to a stop.

The cab driver, however, told the police that he did not see the oncoming train and that he did not hear the train in crossing the intersection.

Another traffic investigator, SPO1 Mario Aoga, told the barrister that the taxi driver would be charged with reckless imprudence resulting in homicide and multiple physical injuries in addition to overloading. He pointed out that a taxi's seating capacity was only five persons, including the driver and 17 which imposed a ban on the three wheeled vehicles in the city's main roads.

The ban took effect on Dec. 1.

During the hearing, Almudena's lawyer Ellen Omar Jones filed a motion to withdraw as counsel of the petitioners, lodging driver Fernando Pecores, who told the court that since the implementation of the ban, he could no longer provide for his family.

"I don't have any other means of livelihood," he said in Filipino.

"We want to prove that the executive orders are causing grave and irreparable damage to the drivers," Jones told the court.

On the other hand, Bonanty de la Cruz, the city's legal officer said Lim's representative said that the ban of the likelihood and the impounding of the three-wheeled vehicles were repealed because of the twin orders.

In an interview after the hearing, he also stressed that the operation of the lodging ban is not contrary to the executive orders issued by Lim which banned motor-powered vehicles from national roads.

Action deferred on 'kuliglig' drivers' petition for TRO

By Jayleen V. Garcia

HEARING of pedicab and the kuliglig (motorized pedicabs) will have to wait until next year for the court to act on their petition for the issuance of a temporary restraining order (TRO) against Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim's drive to clear roaming them from the city's major thoroughfares and terminal stands.

During yesterday's hearing, presiding Judge Ofelia Diaz of the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 39 asked the drivers and Lim's representative to submit their written comments on the TRO petition within two days.

He also ordered the parties to submit their position papers within 10 days and then set the preliminary conference for the case on Feb. 3 next year.

The hearing was the first conducted on the petition for a TRO filed by members of the Alyansa ng Nagkakaisang Operators at Kuliglig Drivers ng Manila Ltd. (alagadlin Manila) in protest of Lim's Executive Order Nos. 16 and 17 which imposed a ban on the three-wheeled vehicles in the city's main roads.

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"I don't have any other means of livelihood," he said in Filipino.

"We want to prove that the executive orders are causing grave and irreparable damage to the drivers," Jones told the court.

On the other hand, Bonanty de la Cruz, the city's legal officer said Lim's representative said that the ban of the likelihood and the impounding of the three-wheeled vehicles were repealed because of the twin orders.

In an interview after the hearing, he also stressed that the operation of the lodging ban is not contrary to the executive orders issued by Lim which banned motor-powered vehicles from national roads.

Metro Manila LGUs form 'G-7' to combat smoking

By Mike Cabuja

SEVEN Metro Manila local government units have formed an alliance called "G-7" to collaborate in the fight against smoking and the strict implementation of the Tobacco Regulation Act of 2003.

The "G-7" is composed of the the cities of Marikina, Makati, Pasig, Mandaluyong, Caloocan, Manila and Quezon City, according to a statement from the Marikina public information office (PIO).

The Tobacco Law or Republic Act No. 9211 regulates the packaging, use, sale, distribution and advertisement of tobacco products. It also prohibits smoking in public places like centers, for instance, the premises of public and private hospitals and clinics, and public conveyances.

The statement said the group was formed during the second phase of a workshop series on "Greater Tools and Tools" for the enforcement and implementation of the tobacco law.

It added that the different plans to harmonize anti-smoking initiatives and strengthen enforcement mechanisms already in place.

It also presented specific action plans for enforcing RA 9211 and other related ordinances.

In Marikina, the city government said it would conduct a series of educational campaigns against smoking through the city's media stations and newspapers.

METROBRIEFS

Tanker crashes into post in Valenzuela City

A 40-FOOT chemical tanker crashed into a post in Valenzuela City yesterday after its driver lost control of the vehicle when he attempted to avoid a speeding motorcycle that had cut across his path. The accident happened on Maysilo-Hulo Highway at around 5 a.m. Its rescuers reported the accident which caused heavy traffic in the area because it took some time before the tanker was removed. A police report said the driver of the tanker, Edwin Calderon, 33, a resident of Angat in Bulacan province, was traveling on the northbound lane of the thoroughfare when a motorcycle suddenly swerved across his path. Calderon said he steered away from the motorcycle but crashed into a post located right in front of Our Lady of Fatima University. Motorcycle rider, however, managed to escape without injury. The accident caused traffic to build up as far as Karuhatan Road before the area was cleared before noon. Aristher Nelson Magbuyo

Fire hits hospital, forces patients' evacuation

A FIRE broke out in the laboratory area of South Superhighway Medical Center (SSMC) at Kilometer 17, West Service Road in Parañaque City yesterday morning, damaging equipment and forcing the evacuation of patients. No casualties were reported although the photographer of a newspaper and two hospital staffers were nearly trapped inside the burning building. Parañaque fire marshal Mariano Manuel said All Valley of the Manila Bulletin sustained slight injuries after he and the two hospital staffers were left inside the building for some time before they managed to find their way out. Manuel said the fire started at the hospital's laboratory at the ground floor, near the X-ray and dialysis department at 8:07 a.m. The flames, then spread to an adjacent two-story clinic house at 1044 Chestnut St. in Barangay Moreno Green. "There were 10 patients at the time but they were all safely evacuated to escape the raging flames and blaze," Manuel said as the private hospital manager rushed for their quick response. By 8:30 a.m., the fire reached the 6th alarm and razed seventeen houses before it engulfed the upper floors of the hospital. It was put out at 12:28 p.m. Arson investigator PO3 Gerardo Magnos said the four-story SSMC was 75 percent damaged with the damage cost estimated at around P15 million. Tina G. Santos

House used as ham factory goes up in flames

AN UNATTENDED liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) caused a fire in a ham factory in Quezon City before midnight Monday. PO2 George Dasalla of the Quezon City Police District said the fire started at around 11:30 p.m. and was put out in less than 30 minutes. No one was reported injured. Based on the arson investigator's report, the fire started at 34 K-6th Judge Jimenez St. in a house owned by Benjamin Sangalang. "An open LPG tank allegedly caused the fire," Dasalla said. Sangalang's neighbors said the house was being used as a ham factory although they did not know it is not supposed Nancy C. Carvajal

S. Korea to fortify 5 islands near the North

SEOUL—South Korea's president on Tuesday vowed to turn five islands along the tense border with North Korea into "military fortresses" with jobs for permanent civilian communities, including those destroyed in a North Korean artillery attack.

President Lee Myung-bak's comments came as the chief of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff flew to Seoul to give reassurances of the US commitment to the country's defense, and as the top diplomats from the United States, Japan and South Korea gathered in Washington in a show of unity. North Korea was warned of "provocative and belligerent" behavior and direction to nuclear arms programs.

Tensions are still high on the Korean peninsula following the Nov. 23 North Korean shelling of Yeonpyeong Island, a day reminiscent of military fears and fighting communities along the Korean disputed western sea border. The attack killed two South Korean Marines and two civilians, and reduced many homes and shops to charred rubble.

Lee, in comments posted on his presidential website, said he wanted to "gradually push to make (the five from time) follow (his islands) military fortresses" and to create jobs so local residents can continue to live on all of the islands.

Some of the 1,300 civilians on Yeonpyeong Island have fled, with many now living in a public bathhouse that has been converted into a refugee center in the port city of Incheon.

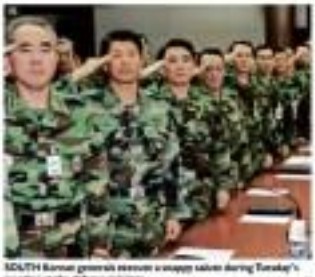
Lee has been criticized for a military response to the shelling that was deemed too slow and too weak. He has ordered reinforcements for the thousands of South Korean troops stationed on Yeonpyeong and the four other border islands, as well as top-level weaponry and upgraded rules of engagement.

Even while promising more fortifications on the islands, the South Korean government has worked to show neutral decision that it will also help the islanders. Many Yeonpyeong residents have said in emotional TV and newspaper interviews that they don't know whether they want to go back to their villages.

Seoul plans to spend $27 million to help rebuild Yeonpyeong. The city of Incheon, which has jurisdiction over the island, has requested money from the central government to modernize shelters and buy equipment, including new boats for fishermen.

South Korea on Tuesday resumed previously scheduled week-long artillery exercises. However, an oddity were happening along the disputed sea border because of bad weather, military officials said, speaking on conditions of anonymity according to internal rules.

North Korea has blamed South Korean military drills conducted on Yeonpyeong on Nov. 23 for its artillery fire. The North disputes the maritime border drawn in 1953 by UN forces and considers the waters around Yeonpyeong, which lies just 11 kilometers from its shores, its territory. AP


SOUTH Korean generals exercise a happy salute during Tuesday's meeting at the defense ministry. —

WORLDBRIEFS

Climate talks

CANCUN—It may not last, but a spirit of compromise seems to have settled over the annual UN climate conference as negotiators enter its final days looking for agreements on secondary tools for coping with global warming. The open sniping between the United States and China that marked periods talks earlier this year was not in evidence on Monday as the second week of the two-week meeting got under way. AP

Colombia landslide

BELLO—Rescue workers recovered 23 bodies but said more than 150 people remained missing and feared dead on Monday following a landslide that buried a poor Medellin suburb, amid Colombia's heaviest rains in decades. The rains that triggered Sunday's landslide in the suburb of Bello have also driven thousands from their homes, damaged coffee and flower crops and washed the two main highways that are mountainous Colombia's commercial backbone. AP

British pullout

KABUL—British troops may start withdrawing from Afghanistan in 2011, British Prime Minister David Cameron said during a surprise trip to the country on Tuesday. Since taking office in May, Cameron said his government had scaled back British ambitions in Afghanistan and acknowledged the dangers of losing public support. He also said 8,000 British troops would start their combat role in Afghanistan by the end of 2014. AP

Drunk Chinese official

BEIJING—A Chinese government official was pardoned of having drunk killed five teenagers while driving over the weekend, the latest deadly hit-and-run case involving a government official. Ge Gingyang, the port office chief of Luoning county in the central province of Henan, drove his car in reverse into a group of seven teenagers walking beside a road on Sunday, killing three on the spot. Two others died later on a hospital, the official Xinhua News Agency reported late Monday. AP

Frugal gamblers

ATLANTIC CITY—The amount of time gamblers are spending in Atlantic City casinos is falling, and they're holding on more tightly to their wallets while they're there. A new statistical study shows the amount of time gamblers spent inside casinos in the second-tier gambling market in the United States, after Las Vegas, is down more than 22 percent, and the amount of money they spend there is down almost 30 percent over the last four years. And the hit to the casinos' bottom line is estimated. Gross operating profit per hour is down 51 percent. AP

'Palinism,' 'Obama-mess'

LOS ANGELES—"Palinism" and "Obama-mess" are likely to be among the top global words of 2011, as the United States gears up for its next presidential elections, according to a language-monitoring group. The coming year will also likely be commonly deemed "Twenty-Eleven" as the English-speaking world moves away from conglomerated over how to pronounce the first years of the decade, the Global Language Monitor said on Monday. Reuters

Humane killing of mice

NEW YORK—New York's police department and the Chicago Transit Authority won praise and "compassion awards" on Friday for their humane methods of killing mice. The animal rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Peta) said the police department does not the award for replacing glue traps that made for a slow and cruel death with devices that snap the neck of mice and kill them instantly. Reuters

Aspirin cuts cancer risks

LONDON—Taking low doses of aspirin can reduce the risk of many kinds of cancer, scientists said on Tuesday, and the evidence is strong enough to suggest people over 40 should take it daily as protection. The findings will fuel an already intense debate about the benefits of taking aspirin, which can increase the risk of bleeding in the stomach to around one patient in every thousand per year. Reuters

Lira Lorenz B. Dasco

The WORLD

Assange to surrender

LONDON—WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is expected to surrender to British police on Tuesday as part of a Swedish sex crimes investigation—one of a host of international legal, financial and security challenges closing in on his secret-spilling website.

Lawyer Mark Stephens has said that Assange, who has been hiding out at an undisclosed location in Britain since WikiLeaks began releasing hundreds of U.S. diplomatic cables in the Web last week, would sue over any efforts from London's Scotland Yard.

The police force on Tuesday said it wouldn't comment until an arrest had been made.

The Internet-based organization's team for maneuver is surviving by the day. It's been battered by Web attacks, cut off by Internet service providers and subjected to a barrage of innuendo thrown out of the United States.

In the latest development, Swiss authorities closed Assange's bank accounts, depriving him of a key fundraising tool. MasterCard has also pulled the plug on payments to the site, according to technology news website CNET.

The attacks appeared to have been at least partially successful in muzzling the flow of secrets. WikiLeaks has not published any new cables to the Internet in more than 24 hours, although stories about them have continued to appear in The New York Times and The Guardian, two of the newspapers given advance access to all 250,000 documents.

WikiLeaks Twitter feed, generally packed with updates, appeals and juicy comments, has been silent since Monday night, when the group warned that Assange's arrest might be imminent.

The 39-year-old Australian's legal troubles stem from allegations leveled against him by two women in mid-August in Sweden over the summer.

Assange is accused of rape and sexual molestation of one case and of sexual molestation and unlawful coercion in another. AP

ASSANGE

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BENEDICT XVI

China to pick Catholic bishops

BEIJING — China's bishops on Tuesday opened a meeting to choose leaders of the government-backed Catholic Church amid tensions with the Vatican after it denounced the recent ordination of a bishop who did not have the Pope's approval.

The meeting in Beijing to elect new heads of the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association and the Council of Chinese Bishops will be another source of friction because the latest disapproval of such ordinations, saying both organizations ran counter to Catholic doctrine.

If choice runs as planned in choosing top Communists, Bishop Ma Yinglin and several aides will likely hold the top positions, it will likely hinder the tentative efforts at outreach made by Pope Benedict XVI.

Chinese authorities also are pressuring some bishops to attend the Beijing meeting, a Vatican-affiliated agency said.

Ties between China and the Vatican already were strained because of a dispute over the Nov. 20 ordination of Fav. Joseph Gao Zhenli as bishop. The Vatican also slammed Chinese authorities for forcing Vatican-approved bishops to attend the ordination ceremony.

Communist China forced its Roman Catholics to cut ties with the Vatican in 1950, and worship is allowed only in state-backed churches, although millions of Chinese belong to unofficial congregations loyal to Rome. AP

Bukbang Pinoy Launches first Stores

Pinoy customers looking for quality medicines at affordable prices need not look far as Bukbang Pinoy (BP) would likely be opening at a hospital location nearby. This new player in the Philippines' drugs-retail industry has its expansion plans, the opening of 100 branches nationwide, 20 of which will open in the next two months, according to its Chief Executive Officer Dr. Luz Jesong.

"Bukbang Pinoy is a Philippine-registered company with direct tie-ups to medical and pharmaceutical contract manufacturers here and abroad to provide quality products and professional service to Filipino families looking for both branded and generic, high quality medicines at low prices. "Bukbang Pinoy is a hybrid store: while other leading pharmacies focus mainly on either branded medicines, generics, or personal care products, Bukbang Pinoy carries all three," says Jesong.

All medicines sold at all BP counters are approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and complies with Current Good Manufacturing Practices (CGMP), guaranteeing consumers of safe, effective, and high quality pharmaceutical products. Each branch will also be supervised by licensed pharmacists delivering quick, accurate, and courteous service. Moreover, "All the stores will be strategically located near hospitals and will be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, assuring customers that life-saving medicines will be within their reach at any given time," Jesong adds.

The drugstore chain will also offer the widest range of medical supplies, devices and disposables, sterile solutions and infusions, intravenous fluids, light medical equipment, galenicals, food supplements, nutriceuticals, personal care, cosmetics, and other wellness products, making it a one-stop shop for all healthcare needs. An in-house label will also be introduced soon.

Ten Bukbang Pinoy branches are opening on December 8 in Pasada St., Bagong Ilog, Pasig City (across Rizal Medical Center), and at Sir Tomas Bldg., Makatino cor. Makating St., East Avenue, Quezon City (at the back of Philippine Heart Center). Four more outlets across Metro Manila will open this December, namely, F. Luna, Quezon City, Mandaluyong (in front of Mandaluyong Medical Center), Las Piñas (in front of Las Piñas General Hospital), and in Sta. Ana, Manila (near Sta. Ana Hospital).

WHAT'S INSIDE

Blazing
Heat torch
Bucks /A32

SPORTS

Editor Teodoro S. Malonzo
Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

BAD LOSER. Vietnam's coach Henrique Calisto (right) refuses to shake hands with his PH counterpart Simon Pik Mawong after the match. /A32

Inspired PH booters battle Burma tonight

By Cedrik F. Tupas

NAM DINH, VIETNAM—Still seeking to grips with its semifinal fate, the Philippine team looked to redeem pacifier reputation when it battles Burma (Myanmar) Wednesday night in its final group match in the AFF Suzuki Cup at the Thien Truong Stadium here.

The Filipinos, whose tenth runs incredibly following a 2-0 conquest of defending champion Vietnam, will be gunning for a first semifinal appearance in Southeast Asia's most prestigious football competition in the 7:30 p.m. (8:30 p.m. at Manila) duel.

A draw against the already eliminated Burmese side would be enough for the Filipinos, the Group B leaders with four points, to advance to the last four.

But team manager Usec Fidaya expects no let up from the squad, especially since the hosts has received unprecedented attention back home.

"The players understand that this is their chance of a lifetime to do something for the sport in the country," said Fidaya. "We want to grab this opportunity."

A win against Myanmar in this bustling city some 90 kilometers southeast of the Vietnamese capital of Hanoi would give the Philippines top spot in Group B.

Singapore, level on points with the Philippines, and Vietnam, which has three points, play in a simultaneous match at the My Dinh Stadium in Hanoi.

If Singapore wins, the Filipinos are sure to progress as the No. 2 squad, even if they lose to Burma.

If Vietnam prevails, the 10 spikes must finish with a better goal difference over Singapore to advance.

The worst case scenario for the Filipinos would be a draw to Burma and a close by Vietnam and Singapore. If that happens, Singapore will top the group with five points and Vietnam will advance as No. 2 squad because of its superior goal difference over the PH spikers.

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YAMAHA
Make It Different

Patriots tap ex-PBA import vs KL Dragons tomorrow

By Jasmine W. Payo

RHY IMPORT Reese Thomas will try to get the Air21s Philippine Patriots out of their slump when they host the Kuala Lumpur Dragons tomorrow in the Air21s Asean Basketball League at the Filoil Flying V Arena in Pasig.

Thomas, who replaced the under-performing Donald Little, powered the Air21 Express to its first PBA Finals appearance in 2008 by averaging 20.3 points, 14.3 rebounds, 3.5 assists and 1.6 blocks.

And coach Louie Alas and team officials hope the 6-foot-9 Thomas will bring the same kind of domineering presence on the court when the Patriots seek to end a three-game skid against the visiting Dragons at 4 p.m.

"We hope we can now reap the benefits," said Hurricane Center CEO Mikee Romero, who oversees the team with businessman Tony Boy Cojuangco.

"It was very unfortunate that we played with only one import the most of our games due to injuries and our head coach was not also assured [twice due to] illness."

The Patriots fell to a share of second at 6-4 with the Dragons as import troubles hounded the defending champions starting with the release of the injury-plagued Ato-shop Johnson early in the season.

Rashorie Wright came on board as replacement, but the former star of the Jordan national team had been inconsistent in recent games.

The 6-foot-7 Little was ranked last week of not averaging only 12.4 points and 13.4 rebounds in nine games.

The Patriots bowed to Indonesia's collectivelling Jacinta Medan Britama, 82-78, to Jakarta last Saturday for their third straight loss, a first for the team since the maiden season of the six-nation tournament last year.

Llamados, Bolts dispute 4th slot

E-Painters duel Express in nightcap

By Manong R. Castillo

DEFENDING CHAMPION Derby Ace and tough rookie squad Marinho collide today with the outcome dropping fourth spot in the PBA Philippine Cup playoffs at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Llamados battle the B-Meg in the 5 p.m. game over an Hula at Bites and Air21, teams in danger of winding up either in seventh or eighth spots, single-outcome 7:30 p.m. venue.

Derby Ace saw its five-game winning streak and last week and fell into win with Marinho at 6-6.

As things stood, San Miguel Beer has already earned a twice-to-beat privilege, with idle Barangay Ginebra and Talk N' Text likely to dispute the second berth on Dec. 10.

The top two teams in the elimination round meet just one-win against the No. 7 and No. 8 teams to get in the semifinals while the next four teams collide in a best-of-three series.

Pennedas, at 2-10, and Shinko Bolt, at 2-12, had earlier banned out.

Peter Anie Simon has taken over most of the scoring load for the Llamados and is the biggest reason for the five-game romp by the Derby Ace crew.

Ginebra	10	1
Talk N' Text	9	2
Santa Ana	7	4
San Mig Coffee	6	5
B-Meg	6	5
Derby Ace	6	6
Marinho	5	6
Powerade	3	8
Shinko Bolt	2	10
Pennedas	2	10

GAMES TODAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
5 p.m. – Llamados vs Bolts/Aces
7:30 p.m. – B-Meg vs Derby Ace

The erstwhile best sixth man in the league has been getting the call to start and has blossomed into a true star alongside James Yap, the reigning MVP.

Mac Cardona, meanwhile, will bounce Shinko's change as the B-Boys try to sustain an impressive showing and qualify high in the playoffs.

Both the Bolters will support Cardona, while Chris Ross, the revelation for the squad this season, will again start at the point guard spot and quarterback the Marinho offense.

Ross barely missed posting his first career-triple double in the last two games of the B-Boys, shooting six points that were with 12 rebounds and 10 assists in a 75-79 win over Barako Bull and then getting 21 points, nine rebounds and nine assists in a 94-98 loss to the Bossers.

Matt Pingris will play in just his second game for the Llamados.

DERBY Ace's Peter June Simon (left) takes it strong to the hoop against Rain or Shine's John Ferrick in a recent game. ARNOLD ALMACEN

Solar drops PBA for 'feminine' programs

By Manong R. Castillo

SOLAR Entertainment is dropping out early the PBA games but the NBA and Asean fights of Manny Pacquiao as well.

With a new partner infusing capital and wanting a new direction, Solar Sports yesterday formally informed the PBA board of governors that it will cease covering the games after the ongoing Philippine Cup.

The official statement from the pro league's media arm only said that Solar had informed the PBA of its decision to reformat and did not elaborate why.

After twin-plus seasons, it is dropping the PBA coverage with still two conferences left in its contract.

A very reliable source, however, said the bosses that Solar has acquired a new partner, which the source declined to name by now, and that the partner wants the television outfit to go "feminine" and to have all sports programs in its current lineup of shows.

With this development, the league announced that bidding for the rights to cover the league will start in January even as Solar took the PBA that it is holding talks with TV giants ABS-CBN and TV5 to venture the final two semifinals of its contract.

"Nothing is definite at this time," commissioner Chito Salud was quoted in the statement. "They're [Solar] still talking in a third party."

League Asst. Team Packs of Derby Ace was assured by Solar through CEO Dave Chanliong that it would cover the rest of the Philippine Cup.

Inspired PH booters duel Myanmar tonight

Front page A29

Making the semifinals was sweet to the azkals bragging rights until that historic victory against Vietnam last Sunday, and skipper Aly Borromeo has moved to temper the excitement from their achievement.

"It's been normal the past two days," said Borromeo, noting the avalanche of congratulatory messages that the team has been receiving on social networking site Facebook and all the media attention in the Philippines.

"But we must forget about Vietnam and focus on Myanmar."

The Burmese booters carry a dream, judging from their fighting performance in the 1-2 loss to Singapore last Sunday.

Despite the criticism from German coach Hans-Jurgen Gabler about their defensive style, the Filipinos intend to rely on a more defensive 4-4-2 formation, leaving Ian Araneta and Phillip Patrick Younghusband up front.

"We've just played to our strengths," said Borromeo. "If we play the way we did against Vietnam, we are sure to win."

Chieffy Caligdong has recovered from a knee injury and may start in the place of Reed Oninla, whose workmanlike performance up the left wing earned plaudits from the coaching staff here.

Simon McMenemy, the Philippines' British coach, said the squad is not looking past Burma.

"It's very difficult to try to stay grounded after what they've done, because things like that don't happen very often," said McMenemy.

"It's much as we've stated, we're not looking further than the next game. [Burma] will give us problems because they have nothing to lose."

"It's a massive game, even bigger than the Vietnam game," said Filipino-British defender Neil Dane Gay referring to the clash against Myanmar, which also recorded a heavy 1-7 defeat to Vietnam.

"We will throw away all our hard work but if we lose."

Southwoods, Mizuno begin Fil-Am clash

BAGUIO CITY—Manila Southwoods wants to title retention bid against dare challenges Mizuno in the PBA championship division of the 8-ball Fil-Am Cue Invitational tournament today at the Camp John Hay course here.

With the top players from Cordillera and The Country Club missing the tournament, the Southwoods billiards duel will provide competitive action to the annual tournament sponsored this year by Toyota.

Southwoods is fielding a young lineup composed of Dimps Daing, Joseph Tan-Isorena, Tonky Hernial, Charlie Chang and Isang Sibayan jones.

Backed by former junior ace Aaron Bacha, Mizuno will give for its second title in six years.

"Standings-wise, we are behind but I think we can give them a good fight," said Bacha, who played for Southwoods in the team's debut here in 1998.

Backing Bacha are Rodel Mangalindan, Richard Lucas, Jr. Garcia and King Gerbacio.

Meanwhile, the scores in the other divisions came in late on the second day of the event hosted by the American Cue Center, Rusty Pregoy, Wilmar Sports, Gatchalo, Cues Plaza and Supreme Billiards.

By TDP CHOICE
& Santa Ana Post

Martinez lead big guns' 150 km road race romp

TOMAS Martinez leads two fellow servicemembers for the National Open gold.

TOMAS MARTINEZ, Renato Sembrano and Joel Calderon finished 1, 2, 3 on the big-game climbed the PhilCycling National Open for Road named-race yesterday in Tagaytay City.

Martinez clocked four hours, 38 minutes and 10.09 seconds in riding the Elite category of the 150-kilometer race that started and ended at the Tagaytay City International Convention Center.

Sembrano secured up 1:07.30 off Martinez, while the 2009 Philpak Pinoy winner Calderon marched 1:12.79 further back.

Integrated Cycling Federation of the Philippines (PhilCycling) president and Tagaytay Mayor Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino fired the starting gun for the race that will help determine the members of the national pool to various Union Cycliste International events in 2011.

Finishing outside the top 10 in the Elite race were Mizuno (fourth: 11:44.29 behind), Shewet Diemars (5: 15:05), Marcelo Bersan (3:27.47), Oscar Sinsuko (3:37.30), Jason Lucilo (3:43.96), Ruby Ravina (4:38.35) and Joseph Millanes (5:41.75).

Ronnie Lim clocked 2:13:44.78 in winning the Junior category of the road race. Kenneth Jedio was second, 37.11 seconds behind, with John Mark Castrique (7:17.21) third, Richard Acenda (11:26.81) fourth and Ronnie Sipin (13:14.00) fifth.

The Open resumes Wednesday with the 40-km individual time trial.

AFP riders advance; Catalan eyes 2 golds

TWO-TIME Southeast Asian Games gold medalist Alfie Catalan and former Tour of Luzon champion Warren Davadilla led Veterans-AFP to the finals of the 4,000-meter team pursuit in the 2010 National Open Cycling Championships yesterday at the Amoranto Velodrome.

Armed Forces clocked the session and 26.31 seconds, beating the Army in four-lap Team Tagaytay (5:27.45), which settled for the bronze.

AFP disputes the gold on Thursday against the Navy, which clocked a better time of 5:16.77 in the other semifinals of the Open organized by one of two blocs in the Integrated Cycling Federation of the Philippines.

The 28-year-old Catalan later advanced to the 4,000-meter individual pursuit finals after beating Tour top Filipino champion Ariel Quintal by more than 12 seconds in the time of 5:05.10 as the team petitioned headed by Sharjah La Clemente Cristine, Fepal, Gatorade, Magnolia Mixer and New Balance Builders.

Abrasos will challenge Catalan for the gold on Thursday.

The 3,000m women's pursuit finals will feature Rizza Lopez against star Maria Herminia. Lopez clocked 4:07.20 in the semifinals while Borrigo timed 3:51.27.

2 breeders top Bakbakan

TWO HORSEMASTS from a record field of 3,330 entries—Ralph Diego of Mint and Quarter Cee Jester Suarez—raked the NPCS Bakbakan Stakes yesterday at the Metro Manila Turf Club.

Diego's Grand Richelle 2 gamefinish and Suarez's Rendez Dejesus pasted 10 wins each.

Diego's high-flying duos Rachel drew the biggest applause with their spectacular victories.

On the other hand, Suarez's entries baffled opponents with an orthodox fighting strike.

Diego's preferred developments, the National Federation of Gamefowl Breeders will hold the eliminations for its Clean Up Pit Bing Derby on Dec. 10 and 12 at the Pinoy City Cockpit.

The guaranteed prize is P8 million for an entry fee of P6,888.

Philippine Open makes it back to Asian Tour roster

KUALA LUMPUR — The Philippine Open has been listed among 28 provisional tournaments making up the 2011 Asian Tour schedule will round throughout Asia and as far as Switzerland.

Last held as part of the Asian Tour in 2009 with Angelo Que as champion, the Philippine Open will be held next at the Mimosa Black Knight Golf and Country Club from May 9 to 8.

Mimosa Black president Dr. Philip Ella Jalen disclosed recently that he is currently working with prospective sponsors to raise the minimum total prize of $300,000 for the event.

Meanwhile, hosted an all-Filipino Philippine Open last year with Elmer Indonesia emerging as champion. This year's Open is set next at Valley Golf with National Golf Association of the Philippines officials hoping that some foreign players would show up to contend with the country's top pros.

The solid calendar of elite tournaments is due largely to the support of major sponsors, event promoters and golf bodies across the region, said Pat Ella Hao, the Asian Tour's executive chair, Monday.

Asia's elite players will shoot for a projected total prize fund of over $45 million next year. Asian Tour News

Big companies knocking on D-League door

IN HUDDLE

Beth Cella

"DON'T wait for the conclusion of today's PBA board meeting," a collegiate league covering the PBA beat advised, after I told him of my plan to write about the result of the meeting in today's column.

The niche said I will miss my deadline for sure if I waited, because there were three vital items in the agenda to be tackled: The long overdue formation of the referees academy; the Developmental vs D-League, and the Solar TV issue.

"The board will convene at the PBA office for lunch at 12 noon, with the call to order coming immediately after. Considering the importance of the items in the agenda, I'm sure the discussions will stretch all the way to dusk. Peter Clare Ilang will be there for the crucial talk on the television coverage," my colleague said.

Peter is the chief operating officer of the Solar Entertainment Corp., official television covers of the PBA.

* * *

During the planning session in Bangkok last September, commissioner Chito Salud informed the media that the board next year has plans on forming a developmental league. He recommended running two leagues is not going to be that easy.

But now that it looks like there will be no middle league like the PBL to bridge the gap between the collegiate leagues and the PBA, the latter is forced to make a move.

That is actually the think I'm most interested in. My colleague said the initial plan is to put the D-League under the jurisdiction of the PBA Commissioner's office. Only a different technical director will be hired by the D-League.

* * *

Membership in the D-League will be open to PBA members as well as non-members. Interestingly, the team involved are very affordable. I'm not sure I got my figures right but I'm told that the player's minimum salary in the D-League has been pegged at P15,000 a month and the maximum at P25,000, plus a salary cap of P1 million per season.

Incidentally, the league will be owned by the PBA. A PBA team that also has a Developmental team will have the special privilege of acquiring players from its D-team without going through the draft.

Another special benefit for a PBA ballclub with a D-team is that the players in both teams will be allowed to move up and down, as desired by management. Not too obviously this is one way to attract new PBA hatchlings.

Right now, the plan is not to have a board of directors for the D-League, but if members for succeeding batches among the Owners, he says there will be a thirst for the functional body.

All the features I mentioned about the D-League were only recommendations as of yesterday and was up for approval during the board meeting.

From what I gathered, several congressmen have been inquiring as to how to join the PBA D-League and what statutes are involved. There are also numbers of appearances for the posse of senatorial district and constituencies, if the board changes its collective minds and decides to get one.

The D-League sounds exciting. Definitely it will be a perfect complement to the PBA.

* * *

Last call from former Sen. Nikki Coseteng and swim coach Susan Papa, organizers of the Peace and Unity Swimming marathon relay: "Mallapes, we invite you and your family, team, friends to join our swim relay to break the Guinness World Record set by Italy. You need 10 swims over 10 minutes. Registry here! The event starts Dec. 19, 3 p.m., and will go all the way to Dec. 31, all day all night. One-hour swim lang bawat isa. Anuhan nemin kaya. Sa bagong swim pool ng Diliman Preparatory School. #BIC Swimmable and Drinkable. Sobanot pa."

RONALD JOYCE makes a return against the Japanese duo of Hiroki Kato and Tsukasa Nishimura during a men's doubles match in the PCA Open. KEVIN ECHIN

Trouble-free start for top PCA lady bets

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHENOMENO sisters Anna Clarice and Anna Christine recorded impressive opening-round victories along with Filipino-American Denise Kimmerly yesterday in the singles of the 29th Philippine Columbian Association Open tennis championships.

Trying to move out of the shadow of their famous basketball superstar dad Alvin Patrimonio, the siblings made quick work of their assignments to set their sights of the title that slipped through their fingers last year.

The 17-year-old Anna Clarice, the top seed who stands five-foot-seven and packs a powerful forehand, thumped Ivy de Castro, 6-0, 6-1, to advance against Venus Jade Capulong, who seeded qualifier Odette Asperin by the same score.

Her 18-year-old sister and second seed Anna Christine doubled up Alyssa Lafuey, 6-1, 6-2, as well were rules on Linda Sarreon, who eliminated Honey Mae Gilles, 6-2, 6-4.

"I felt good today. I hope we can win the title this time," said Anna Clarice, who lost to eventual champion Cristina Mae Acosta in the semifinals last year.

Kimmerly, the Pinoy-a junior week 2 singles champ, also made her presence felt courting Anne Line, 6-1, 6-1. The daughter of a Filipina from Cagayan Valley next battles national team player Michelle Tang who won by walkover.

Marinel Rufin, one of the country's rising junior netters, also progressed with a 6-1, 6-2 triumph over Trish Bala to set up a second round duel against Mary Gonzales, who drummed Trudy Anonuevo, 7-5, 6-2.

Asistio leads rash of PSC Metro tennis upsets

By Marc Anthony Reyes

HANS MESTO pulled off a 6-3, 7-5 upset over second seed Raphaniel Reyes over at top seed John Aliche walked over to the quarterfinals yesterday in the boys 16-under of the PSC Metro age-group tennis championships at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

Asistio set a duel against 9th seed Bruce Gerodias who bested Andrew Bering, 6-2, 7-6 (7-1), while Aliche will face Bernie Jun Bering who stunned 5th seed Dionisio Hindelang, 6-3, 7-5.

Gabriel Gutierrez also pulled an upset with a 6-3, 6-4 clocker over third seed Roberto Joy Tenero. He will take on Ejde Pinpin, who ousted Justine Kayle Veras, 3-6, 6-2, 1-0-8. Mike Navarro also advanced via walk over to arrange a quarterfinal encounter against eternal Ryan Bernie Alhambra Princess, 2-6, 6-3, 10-7.

Asistio also made his move in the 15-under with a 6-1, 6-1 win over Hanz Ramoso. Also winning were Eric Jed Dilorato, who beat Miles Bingsang, 6-0, 6-2, 6-3, and David Bullock, who beat Tim Lucas Barker, 7-5, 6-1.

In the boys 12-under, top seed Julian Dayoh barged into the quarterfinals with a 6-0, 6-1 nod of Vincent Jerome Asido.

Also making it to the quarters were second seed Elmo Tenazeraz via walk over, seventh seed Jacob Martin who beat John Angelo Cornes, 7-5, 6-3, and Mahmud Dimasiw who bested Mat Raphael Tong, 6-3, 6-4.

POC seeks pension package for retired nat'l athletes

By Jane Meneses

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee will ask Congress to approve a pension package for retired national athletes.

"They gave the best years of their lives for the national team. It's only fitting that they receive something in return," said POC president Jose (Peping) Cojuangco Jr. yesterday.

The local Olympic chief said the "retirement plan" for athletes will be one of the topics to be explained to them ongoing discussions with the House committee on youth and sports.

Sports officials are also asking Congress to help them recover the five percent share of the Philippine Sports Commission from the month-

COJUANGCO

ly earnings of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation.

At present, the PSC has been receiving P98 million a month or just 2.5 percent from the gross Pagcor revenue.

Cojuangco said the proposed pension package must be retroactive and should cover all living former athletes.

However, Cojuangco said they have yet to come up with a detailed proposal, particularly the rates and coverage of the retirement benefit.

Aside from financial support, Cojuangco has earlier brought up the possibility of providing housing and livelihood programs for inactive athletes.

The suggested housing project for athletes will be included in the blueprint of the training center being mulled by the POC, which is eyeing Clark Field in Pampanga as one of the possible sites.

Cojuangco said the POC would also help former athletes get decent jobs in government offices.

Unity swim draws 6,000 participants

MORE THAN 6,000 swimmers have enlisted for the first-ever Philippine Peace and Unity Swim, a marathon swimming relay over a 24-hour period, starting Dec. 18 at the Dilliman Preparatory School (DPS) Swimming Center in Mariveles, Quezon City.

The Philippine National Police is coming in full force with a 3,000-strong contingent which underwent basic swimming training under the Swim Pilipinas Swimming Academy (SPSA), organizer of the relay swim.

The SPSA has also enlisted 3,000 swim kids of the Center for Excellency Training Foundation who will join the event.

The DPS, under presidents and chief executive officer, former Sen. Nikki Coseteng, will field 2,000 students.

President Aquino has personally endorsed the event and is inviting all citizens to join in the national effort to break the Guinness world record for the most number of swimmers in a 24-hour relay in an 18.3 m pool.

The standing record is 15,000 swimmers set in Italy last July. Any participant, who can swim the distance without support, is qualified to join.

Backing the event are Pagcor, the Philippine Sports Commission, the Department of Health, Philippine College of Physicians, Philippine Medical Association, Department of Education and the Quezon City government.

Foreigners join Subic marathon

A STRONG foreign field is expected when the 3rd Subic International Marathon kicks off next year's running calendar on Jan. 9 at the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority in Olongapo City.

The race, dubbed as "Run for Fun and Transformation," will start and end at the Hanjin Field with around 13,000 runners seeing action in the centerpiece 42K race and host other categories.

Over 1,000 local Filipinos, Americans and other Asian runners who have registered," race founder Gen. Sam Torres said in yesterday's PIA Forum at Shakey's UP Ayala. *Jasmine B. Payo*

Baseball finals up

EXPERIENCE MAY just spell the difference when the Manila Sharks and the Batangas Bulls in Game 1 of the Dunkin' Donuts baseball Philippines Series 7 championship this Saturday at the Rizal Memorial Stadium.

"I think our lineup will be our advantage," Manila coach Boyet Hidalgo said during the PSA Forum yesterday at Shakey's UP Avenue. "We've more experienced batters we now have eight players from the national team."

Baseball Philippines marketing head Nolan Bernardino, though, sees a tight contest in the opener of the best-of-three showdown set at 1 p.m.

"There's a possible Game 3, if you look at the strengths of the two teams," he said.

The Alabang Tigers and Cebu Dolphins fight for third place at 9 a.m. *Jasmine B. Payo*

GLENN Aguilar will take his talents to Lanao del Norte.

Saulog, Aguilar spearhead Lanao international motocross field

MORE THAN 300 riders led by perennial champions Jorie Saulog and Glenn Aguilar will test the mettle of their international counterparts in the Lanao del Norte International Motocross Invitational on Dec. 11 to 12 at the Mindanao Civic Center Sports Complex in Tubod.

The riders from the Australian Motocross Association—Daniel Bird, Tiger Lacey Sasser CII, Cayen Sundaresman, James Sabre, Sam and Ron de Jesus—have also committed to participate.

Riders will be competing in 13 categories: Intermediate, 85cc and 65cc, Novice Pro/ B, Beginner Local Open Enduro, Ladies, Beginner Open Production, 50cc, Executive, Senior Open Production, Underbone, Executive B Veterans, Novice Local Open Enduro, Executive C and Pro-Liter. *George Llanera, Correspondent*

Francisco targets slot in possible Pacquiao-Mosley undercard

By Dennis U. Erasa, Inquirer Lilo

NEWLY CROWNED World Boxing Association interim super flyweight champion Drian Francisco may fight in the undercard of the projected Manny Pacquiao-Shane Mosley showdown next year in the United States.

Dubbed as "Golden Finn," the 28-year-old Francisco grabbed the interim belt when he stopped Thai veteran Daengpetch Kokietgym in the 10th round of their title fight at Boxing Stadium, Thailand, last Nov. 20.

"It will be a tremendous honor if I can fight in the undercard of the Pacquiao-Mosley bout. It will be a dream come true for me," said Francisco, who was accompanied by Rated by the Will Promotions manager Dinet Asuncion yesterday during the PSA Forum at Shakey's UP Avenue.

Asuncion said he is flying to the US this week to discuss with various stakeholders the possibility of tapping Francisco in the Pacquiao-Mosley card.

Pacquiao is coming off a breaking victory over Antonio Margarito and is slated to announce his next opponent in his birthday party later this month, with Mosley the leading candidate.

By crushing the favored Kokietgym, Francisco, of Tondo Claver Boxing Gym, became the mandatory challenger for the WBA crown.

Francisco (20-0-1, 16 KOs), a native of Ishikawa, Occidental Mindoro, will meet the winner between Rhea Tan Hugo Cuenco (33-4-2, 24 KOs) and Japanese challenger Hiroyuki Hanada (19-0-1, 9 KOs), who will drop a not bet. 22 in Osaka, Japan.

"No problem, I'm ready to fight Cuenco or Hiroshita," said Francisco, who trains under Boxing de la Pena.

However, Asuncion warned that there is a possibility that his prized fighter will have a tuneup before fighting for the WBA crown.

frontRunner mug dive

"LBSU's frontRunner," a coming-out issue of frontRunner magazine, marks its fourth big outing at 8 p.m. the Bonifacio High Streets Tagaog. Pastor Tarsi and Patricia Concepcion will conduct the lectures. For inquiries, call 8023357.

SPORTS

NCRAA: Mariners win No. 5

ELMER Morales and Brylle Dragoldenoid as the Philippine Merchant Marine School Mariners subdued the PATS College of Aeronautics, 87-71, yesterday in the 10th National Capital Region Athletic Association (NCRAA) men's basketball tournament. Morales collected 28 points, while Dragoldenoid in 10 for the solo-leading Mariners, who posted their fifth straight win at the Ultrasonic College gymnasium in Sucat, Parañaque.

Blazing Heat torch Bucks

MILWAUKEE—The Miami Heat are starting to look more like the elite team many envisioned to the off-season as they defeated the Milwaukee Bucks, 88-78, on Monday for their fifth straight win.

Dwyane Wade had a team-high 25 points and a career-high 14 rebounds while LeBron James added 17 points as the Heat continued to play inspired defense in achieving their longest winning streak of the season.

Miami (14-8) had a rough start in the campaign and fell well short of the expectations created when James and Chris Bosh signed with the Heat to join fellow All-Star Wade, but have found their rhythm since a players-only meeting a week ago.

In the opener of a four-game road trip, the Heat never trailed and held the Bucks to 34 percent shooting from the field.

"That's what it's about and that (defense) is the identity of the team," Wade told reporters. "Offensively we can't control it the ball is going in or not. We still have to get the stops."

The Heat led by 13 points late in the third but the Bucks (team 7-13) trimmed it down to 74-71 midway through the fourth. Miami answered with three straight baskets from James, Wade and Bosh, who finished with 16 points and 12 rebounds.

"There was a mental toughness to this win for us that I'm not sure we would have been able to pull this out earlier in the year," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said.

Rookie

HEAT'S LeBron James soars for a slam dunk against the Bucks. AP/FILE

Dumapong leads Para Games bets

By Jasmine P. Payo

VETERAN POWERLIFTER Adeline Dumapong will lead a 54-member Philippine team hoping to improve five gold medals in the 2010 Asian Para Games in Guangzhou, China, from Dec. 12 to 19.

"It's the dream of our athletes with disabilities to have a medal here," Mike Barreiro, president of the Philippine Sports Association for the Differently Abled (Philpsada), said during the PSA Forum yesterday at Rodan's Cafe.

"While athletes and swimming are primary source, we're hoping to win five gold medals."

The Philippines will only compete in seven of 10 sports—athletics, swimming, powerlifting, boccia bowling, table tennis, cycling and judo.

Philpsada executive director Butch Weber said swimmers Ariel Rios and Mary Grace De Vera and athletes Joe Gerly Gonzales are the main medal hopefuls in the inaugural tournament of what used to be the Far East and South Pacific Games for the Disabled (Fespic Games).

The Philippines had a two gold-five silver-10 bronze medal haul in the 2006 edition of the Fespic Games in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

"We're still optimistic," Weber said during the weekly session supported by Biggies, Outdoor Battery and Shakey's. "Even with China around, we can still have our fair share of gold medals."

Barreiro said Vice President Jejomar Binay is expected to join the delegation during the opening ceremony.

Over 3,000 athletes from 43 Asian countries will see action in the event, which also serves as a qualifier for the 2012 London Paralympic Games.

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TENT CITY, MANILA HOTEL
and SMX Convention Center

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Forex reserves breach $60-B mark

BSP buying dollars to temper peso rally

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
Dec. 7, 2018
43.555

STOCK MARKET
Dec. 7, 2018
25.20

Stocks down on profit-taking

LOCAL STOCKS tumbled yesterday as investors were tempted to pocket gains from an earlier market rebound.

The main share Philippine Stock Exchange index shed 25.30 points or 0.5 percent to close at 4,107.92.

The decline was led by the counter for holding firms, which fell 1.2 percent. Only the mining/oil index stayed afloat.

There were only 101 advancers as against 118 decliners and 68 unchanged stocks. Value

SPREAD $2

By Michelle V. Rerra

THE COUNTRY'S reserves of foreign currencies climbed to an all-time high, breaching the $60-billion mark in November due to the heavier-than-usual dollar buying of the central bank in its bid to stem the sharp rise of the peso.

According to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, the gross international reserves rose to $61.3 billion in end-November from the previous record high of $57.15 billion in October.

The latest reserves were up $4 percent from only $44.57 billion as of November last year. It was also enough to cover for 10.7 months' worth of the country's imports and six times the country's debt maturing within the short term.

In the first trading day of November, the peso broke into the 52-to-a-dollar territory in regards its highest level in two-and-a-half years.

The appreciation was carried partly to the rise in remittances sent by Filipinos abroad as they sent more money for the coming yearend holidays. It was also attributed to a surge in foreign "hot money" inflows as the bullish outlook on the Philippines and other Asian economies prompted investors to place more funds in emerging countries in the region.

While the upward pressure on the peso was fueled by optimism, this has caused disarray for among policymakers who said a currency's sharp and sudden movement (whether appreciation or depreciation) was disruptive to businesses.

The strengthening of the local currency has alarmed some exporters since a sustained rise of the peso could eventually dampen the competitiveness of Philippine-made goods by making these products more expensive.

Traders in the foreign exchange market said the BSP had bought more dollars during the month to help ease the apparent selling pressure on the peso. Without the central bank's intervention, they said the peso could have breached the 53:$1 mark.

The BSP would not disclose the amount of dollars it had bought from the market.

In a statement, BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said dollars flowing into the country, portions of which were bought by monetary authorities, were due to rising remittances from Filipinos overseas, improved

FOREX B2

ALFM FAMILY OF FUNDS	Year to Date*	Past 1 Year	Past 2 Years
ALFM Peso Bond Fund	7.67%	8.59%	14.22%
ALFM Dollar Bond Fund	6.86%	6.17%	15.25%
ALFM Euro Bond Fund	4.94%	5.71%	13.41%
ALFM Money Market Fund	2.57%	2.56%	–
ALFM Growth Fund	57.25%	59.59%	150.36%
Philippine Stock Index Fund	39.63%	44.85%	120.14%

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High power costs push inflation to 3% in Nov.

By Rainier M. Dorotheo

11-month average of 3.8% still within gov't target

DUE RISE in consumer prices was faster at 3 percent year-on-year in November mainly due to an uptick in the cost of utilities, the National Statistics Office reported yesterday.

Inflation last month put the average for January to November at 3.6 percent, which Economic Planning Secretary Cayetano Paderanga said was still well within the government's target range of 3.5 to 5.5 percent for the full year.

The rise in the cost of living in November was from 2.8 percent recorded in the same month of 2009.

Compared with the October level, the consumer price index rose 0.6 percent, the same rate record vs the previous month.

Paderanga said Philippine inflation figures reflected firmfound Asian trends where consumer prices continued to be within their respective targets.

"Despite the apparent steady inflation rates on the region, respective central banks remained vigilant in maintaining price stability," Paderanga said.

In November, price increases for the subgroup fuel, light and water surged to 12 percent year-on-year from 9.3 percent in October.

Increases in the prices of services as well as in housing and repairs picked up slightly to 3.6 percent and 3.9 percent, respectively, from 3.7 percent and 3.8 percent.

On the other hand, increases in the prices of the heavily weighted food, beverage and tobacco category continued to slow down, settling at 1.9 percent from 2 percent.

The rise in prices of clothing also eased to 1.7 percent from 1.9 percent. The increase in the prices of miscellaneous items remained at 1.2 percent.

NSO Administrator Carmelita N. Ericta said in a statement that the annual inflation for food alone fell further to 2 percent from the previous month's 2.9 percent.

Prices cold prices of fish and miscellaneous food items picked up while those for rice, cereal preparations, dairy eggs and meats slowed down.

Prices of corn as well as fruits and vegetables continued their decline in November.

Security investment bank Ibaclaim Capital said in a report issued yesterday that the November inflation was a surprise considering that the market expected 2.3 percent.

"Since 2011, we expect food prices to rise, especially given the increase in international food commodity prices, with rice prices being key," Ibaclaim Capital said.

"However, we believe fuel-related costs will continue to serve as a dampening factor, given our in-house forecast that oil will average $85 a barrel in 2011," it added.

Nuclear safety study to start next year

ALMENDRAS

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy will start not just a nuclear safety standard study in line with the government's target of facilitating the operation of a 1,000-megawatt nuclear power plant by 2020.

Energy Secretary Jose Rene D. Almendras said the department has earmarked in its budget P100 million for the study, which is expected to jumpstart the possible development of the country's nuclear power program.

According to Almendras, the DOE would spearhead the study which is expected to be completed within 18 to 24 months. Other agencies such as the state-run National Power Corp. as well as international and local experts are expected to participate in completing the Philippine nuclear study.

He added that this was also in line with the agreement that the Philippine government had signed with other Asean countries aimed at developing a regional safety standard for nuclear power use.

Almendras noted that the study was meant to give the government a better understanding of the current developments in the nuclear energy industry. For instance, he said the trend now was toward smaller, packaged-type facilities.

The energy chief, however, clarified that undertaking the nuclear study did not automatically mean that the present administration would start building nuclear power facilities.

"We're really looking seven to 10 years down the line. Even if you start making decisions now, we cannot put it up immediately. It's going to take a while," Almendras added.

Almendras had said that the DOE merely wanted to start discussions on nuclear power in the hope of getting an "honest to goodness" evaluation. Based on what has happened in other countries, reaching a policy decision alone may take three to six years, while the actual construction of the nuclear facility will take as long as 94 months. Amy R. Remo

Electricity spot market in Visayas to open Dec. 26

By Amy R. Remo

AFTER FACING much delays and opposition, the wholesale electricity spot market (WESM) will finally start operations in the Visayas on Dec. 26, a move seen to finally end the spate of recurring brownouts plaguing the islands since last year.

Energy Secretary Jose Rene D. Almendras said he has assured power consumers in the Visayas that the brownouts would stop with the establishment of WESM since there was a generation capacity of 300 megawatts that was not being brought to the market due to the lack of pricing mechanism.

WESM, which will be operated by Philippine Electricity Market Corp. (PEMC), is similar to the Philippine Stock Exchange except that it trades electricity. Its significance is due to the fact that it will provide power generation companies an assured platform where they can sell their electricity at distribution utilities and cooperatives at competitive prices.

Almendras advanced that initially, power consumers may have to bear with spikes in electricity prices at the WESM until the full capacities of all the new power plants have come in within the first quarter of next year.

However, he said the DOE would be suspending some measures that "is to make sure that market efficiencies can work better."

"What we need to have [are] structures and mechanisms that will create a full safeguards to identify those [price] spikes as soon as we can," he added.

Almendras said electric cooperatives—which earlier raised concerns that power prices would increase once the WESM kicks in—have finally understood how this mechanism could benefit all stakeholders.

The Philippine Independent Power Producers Association (Pipap), the Iloilo Chamber of Commerce and Aboitiz Power Corp. were among those that have been vocally rallying for the establishment of WESM Visayas.

Ray Cunningham, vice president for business development at Aboitiz Power, stressed in a presentation last year that a viable WESM was crucial to investments in new, cost-effective power generation projects.

The ideal move, Cunningham earlier explained, was for the government to fast-track the implementation of the WESM within the year and to integrate it with the Luzon WESM. He added that the government should likewise move to institute a Mindanao WESM no later than mid-2011.

THE GRAND MIDORI MAKATI REDEFINES *luxury living*

A new, opulent address in Makati is fast becoming the talk of the town these days.

Designed and finely crafted for the most discriminating homebuyers, The Grand Midori Makati — the modern project of a joint venture between Federal Land, ORIX Corporation of Japan and Mandaluyong — will soon provide unit owners with spaces that showcases Japanese virtues of simplicity, elegance and serenity. Its strategic location places future residents at the center of Makati living. Simply put, it is one new home address in Makati that is set to redefine luxury living, one you'd be proud to call home.

"Because of its distinct features, we are proud to say that units at Tower 1 of The Grand Midori Makati are now selling fast," says Jose Mari Banares, general manager of Federal Land, Inc. "And with its seamless fusion of convenience, elegance, and security all in one grand design, The Grand Midori Makati is a luxury residence in the city today that offers comfortable lifestyle complete with all the amenities and perks one can expect from the finer things in life."

Indeed, just a few minutes away are upscale shopping establishments which house the world's most exclusive labels, the hottest dining places and trendy lifestyle destinations. Other points of interests such as hospitals, educational institutions, hotels, and the rest of the Makati business powerhouses are also there.

At The Grand Midori Makati, indulgence overlaps with convenience as unit owners and visitors can be picked up or dropped off at the building's elegant porte-cochère leading straight to the grand lobby.

The Grand Midori Makati is an art in itself, crafted precisely to excite and impress. It is a genuine Zen-inspired sanctuary at the heart of a bustling city. The soothing koi pond at the lobby and the Zen garden found in every floor spring an welcoming, respite from the busy, stimulating clutter of the outside world.

The whole residential complex, meanwhile, reflects the dynamic marriage of Filipino artistry and Japanese ingenuity through modern-inspired amenities, aesthetic features, and truly functional details. To ensure that its design will be aligned with the concept of sustainable living, top Japanese design firm Tango Association, the company behind world-renowned developments like The Riviera Hotel in Italy and One Raffles Plaza in Singapore, has been tapped for the design of the project's luxurious common areas.

To appeal to the finer taste of discerning homebuyers, the fully furnished units will also have large picture windows and balconies providing a stunning view of Makati skyline. The kitchen is appointed with a built-in LPG system, and is further complemented by modern kitchen system with built-in cabinets, range hood and granite countertop. This subdued elegance cascades towards the rest of the unit.

Knowing that safety features must be complemented by modern security, The Grand Midori Makati has also come up with sophisticated security measures not common in other high-end developments. Unit owners will be issued their Personalized Access Card Key (PACK) to eliminate unauthorized access to a residents' floor. Fixed closed circuit cameras are also installed in all floors and common areas, backed up by 24-7 roving guards.

The Grand Midori Makati also showcases a number of other amenities that count most those of other upscale real resorts. Its grand centerpiece is a majestic 20 meter lap pool, plus a wading pool for the kids. Jun-ning continues with 150-meter jogging trail, a fitness center/gym and a well-equipped day care center. For momentous occasions, a multi-purpose hall can also be made available for such celebration.

The Grand Midori Makati units can now be viewed at its on-site showroom located along Legaspi St., Legaspi Village, Makati City. For inquiries, call 892-3410/15 or visit www.thegrandmidorimakati.com.ph.

Mother of all budget carriers

BIZ BUZZ
By the staff

MEGA BUDGET carrier Air Asia will set up a Philippine subsidiary in partnership with businessman Tonyboy Cojuangco in a bid to capture a bigger slice of the growing China travel market.

Revealing to sources familiar with the deal, the local unit of the airline owned by Malaysian magnate Tony Fernandes, may commence operations as early as the first quarter of 2011.

Apart from Cojuangco, it will also have as partners Michael Romero of Manila North Harbour Port and former media personality Mason Montemayor.

Frontwoman—who shares Cojuangco's passion for classical guitar music—will be the airline's CEO, we hear.

The new budget carrier has reportedly already gotten the nod of regulators (at least, in principle) and is now in the process of deciding whether it would operate from the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport in Angeles, Pampanga, or the Subic Bay International Airport in Olongapo, Zambales.

Clark has the edge by virtue of its longer runways (two of them, to date), large aircraft handling facilities and proximity to Metro Manila via the North Luzon Expressway. Subic, on the other hand, is a very interesting location for potential tourists. Expect a flurry of lobbying in the coming weeks as decision time for the airline nears.

Incidentally, Mr Asia (named the world's best budget carrier by Skytrax for 2009 and 2010) is a longtime user of the slogan "Now everyone can fly." It should be interesting how the employ our common Cebu Pacific's "It's time everyone flies." Darlene L. Lucas

Global peso bonds, reprise

EXCEPT probably for his love life, the once-mute but ebullient Mr. Speaker Prime Minister, armed with a fresh sovereign credit upgrade from Standard & Poor's, optimism on his public-private partnership agenda on infrastructure building (the key to an economy that he said needs growth) and a high public approval rating, P-Noy's team is sure touting the Philippines back to the overseas debt market to convert more of such goodwill into cash.

But to avoid inflating more foreign exchange into a financial system that's already teeming with overseas remittances and stock market flows, the Philippines' next offshore foray is expected to be another issue denominated to the local currency.

Though it may be cheaper to raise another $1 billion or so from the local treasury bond market given ample domestic liquidity, the biggest argument for going offshore is to avoid more foreign capital inflows that the central bank will have to sterilize apart from widening the investor base of local currency debt paper.

Capitalizing on the success of the maiden $1-billion overseas sale of peso-denominated instruments that had set a new benchmark for Asian debt last September, there is growing expectation that the Philippines will issue more global peso bonds in early 2011.

Oftentimes during the current tenor in the region by offering foreign global bonds after the Christmas and New Year holidays, P-Noy this time will do the opposite unless denominated in the local currency. Doris C. Dumlao

The next power builder

MTD1 the Cojuangco now joining the fray by power generation scores, the Filinvest group has announced plans to hire a senior infrastructure guy to build up the portfolio. According to the grapevine, the new "savant" czar that will head such efforts of the diversifying Filinvest group is likely to be Arnie Alcordo of the Metrobank group's Global Business Power Corp., a leader power generation in the Visayas.

After helping build up tycoon George "TG" Ty's power generation portfolio, it's time for Alcordo to help another tuipan break into this business. Doris C. Dumlao

Gone in seven hours

HENRY Sy-led SM Investments Corp. (SMIC) is not just set to dominate the local property market. The company which has been announcing new projects left and right, is also poised to take the international market, particularly in China, by storm.

The group has been very bullish in the Chinese market in the past few years. Its mall group, under SM Prime Holdings, now has several subsidiaries in different provinces in the country, taking advantage of China's booming economy.

A property analyst said that SMIC recently sold all of the units in a condominium building in the booming city of Xiamen, which the company has not even started building yet.

In fact, it only took the company seven hours before all of the units were pre-sold.

Now, SMIC has another project to in Chinese pipeline—a seven-condominium complex of sole Xiamen. Paolo Montecillo

Preparations for appointment

ASIDE all the rumors flying about whom President Aquino will tap to be the country's next central bank governor, preparations are being made—relatively but rumbling (and quietly)—at Ayala-led Bank of the Philippine Islands for the retirement next year of its president and CEO Aurelio Montinola III.

Gigi, as he's known in bankers' circles, will reach the compulsory retirement age of 65 for the Ayala group, while still being young enough to take the helm of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (especially when one considers his experience as a banker).

According to people in the know—and if things unfold according to plan—Montinola will most likely be replaced at BPI by current BPI Family Bank president Sandra "Pi" Limcaoco (who has yet to name his one-to-watch).

Montinola remains the dove in favorite to be named BSP governor, especially since he has the support of the local business community led by the Makati Business Club, on top of his current post as the president of the Bankers Association of the Philippines.

Of course, it doesn't hurt his chances that BPI's flagship program for supporting overseas Filipino workers is named BPIKay ("Kay" is pronounced "K-Pinoy" [sounds like "P-Pinoy"]—as in "I-Fi-Nay" it's difficult to escape the fact that the President's moniker figures prominently in it.

Talk about having foresight in naming the program, huh? Doris C. Dumlao

Got business alerts and a preview of Biz Buzz the evening before it comes out. Text ON [sic] BUZZ to 4467 (P2.50/alert).

Forex reserves breach ...

From page B1

export earnings and a rise in investments by foreigners in the country's business process outsourcing industry and in portfolio instruments.

The BSP said the foreign exchange reserves were also boosted by income from its investments offshore. The central bank's investments are mostly in US treasuries.

The dollar buying by the BSP is a curb activity and has stunted speculations it would create the central bank to cop into a run has this year.

However, the resulting increase in dollar liquidity of the country's was fuelled by the international financial community, which saw it as improving the credit worthiness of the Philippines.

Standard & Poor's last month raised the country's credit rating from three to two notches below investment grade. It cited the country's rising GDP, which it said made investor more confident about the Philippines' ability to pay its dollar denominated obligations.

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Lights, Camera, Action Car!
All-New Volvo S60 in Action

Unleashed into the Philippine automotive scene with a bold and spirited attitude, the All-New Volvo S60 further rages on board into the pursuit to daring members of the motoring world to embark in this memorable Volvo encounter.

In a five-themed kick-off activity, members of the automotive media were ushered into an art gallery that showcased different interpretations of the new global campaign for the Volvo S60 entitled "Drive". The pieces of artwork served various design purposes.

What are all about passion, emotion, and experience. Much like the All-New Volvo S60 that is a dynamic sports sedan meant to be appreciated and experienced through its sheer power and immediate appeal. The activity presented the six offspring of style and performance – the S60 is an unmistakable representative of transformational design found only throughout consciousness of driving dynamics.

Aside from the carefully thought out exterior and interior design, the new S60 also has a new performance variant – which demonstrates from the name – called the Volvo S60 T6 AWD. Power and other functions is presented on a five-inch in-centre-dash color display that is also the key to the centre console. The driver has access to all entertainment functions via controls in the steering wheel.

It wouldn't be a Volvo if it doesn't come with dual-loading and world-first safety innovations. Equipped with City Safety – a world-first preventive safety technology that automatically brakes the car when it fails to react in time when the vehicle in front slows down or stops – is also introduced in the S60.

Volvo Philippines Director with full safe brake is a groundbreaking technological addition. It can detect pedestrians who walk into the path of your car, automatically brake the car – and automatically apply full braking power if the driver does not react in time. In case of emergency situations, the driver fully operates an audible warning combined with a flashing light to the windscreen, and applies full brakes. At the same time, the car's brakes are pre-charged. If the driver does not react to the warning, and the accident is imminent, full braking power is automatically applied. Pedestrian Detection with Full Auto Brake can avoid a collision with a pedestrian at speeds of up to 35 km/h if the driver does not react in time.

Marian Ditkoff Cruz, correspondent in the Philippines of Volvo cars

For more information, please contact Volvo Philippines Corporate Communications Manager Ms. Rosario Antonio Ann Pamintuan (02) 477-7111 or email e-mail: ingfrom@volvo.com

Stocks down ...

From page B1

turnover stood at P5.70 billion. There was P640 million worth of net foreign selling.

Among the day's decliners were Alliance Global, Ayala Power, Metrobank, PLDT, Ayala, Universal Robina, Banco de Oro, Ayala Land, Bloomberg Semestre, Manila Water, Atlas Mining and Cebu Air.

On the other hand, SM, Meralco, Phelps Dodge, DMCI Holdings and Globe Telecom bucked the downtrend.

Sentiment was likewise sluggish overseas, with the Dow Jones industrial index falling 19.9 points or 0.17 percent to 11,063.19 overnight. Doris C. Dumlao

BUSINESS

GSIS renews ties with Land Bank

Agreement on wider ATM reach to benefit pensioners

By Michelle V. Baron

UNDER A new leadership, the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) has renewed ties with Land Bank of the Philippines by tapping the latter's facility to serve GSIS pensioners.

In a statement released yesterday, GSIS said it already signed a memorandum of agreement with Land Bank to widen the network of automated teller machines (ATMs) from which GSIS pensioners could withdraw.

The GSIS effectively expanded its ties with Land Bank, which came under severe strain when Winston Garcia used to helm the government pension fund.

A deposit-related dispute arose in 2003, which led the two institutions to sever their relationship. In the time, Land Bank was headed by Margarita "Menchu" Lim.

The agreement will allow pensioners, particularly those living in remote parts of the country, to easily access their GSIS benefits.

Under the agreement, GSIS pensioners may open accounts with Land Bank or they can avail themselves of its ATM services.

Land Bank has 992 ATMs nationwide, mostly in rural areas.

"This measure will now make it easier for our members and pensioners, especially those in the provinces, to access their benefits and loans," said Robert Vergara newly appointed GSIS president and general manager.

GSIS and Land Bank's ATM services for pensioners would be jobs tested in January 2011. The test will cover 14,000 pensioners in Batangas, Laguna, Cabanatuan in Oriental Mindoro, Mandaluyong in Occidental Mindoro, and Boac in Marinduque.

By July, all interested GSIS members may have the option to avail of Land Bank's ATM services, the GSIS said.

Currently, it is Union Bank that serves the ATM service needs of GSIS pensioners.

According to GSIS, pensioners may opt to keep their accounts with Union Bank or open an account with Land Bank.

Philippines urged to consider FTA with Taiwan

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—Taiwan's Envoy to the Philippines, Donald C.T. Lee, said the Philippines should seriously consider signing a free trade agreement (FTA) with Taiwan to boost investments in the country.

In a speech during a luncheon hosted by Negros Occidental Gov. Alfredo Marañon Jr. at the Provincial Capitol here, Lee cited the need for a trade agreement to protect overseas Filipinos working in Taiwan.

"If the Philippines does not take swift action, Taiwan investors that should have settled in the Philippines would turn to mainland China due to ECFA (Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement) negotiated effect," said Lee, who represents the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in the Philippines.

Taiwan, recently signed an ECFA with mainland China, which was supposed to further normalize cross-strait trade relations between the two economies.

If the Philippines will not sign an FTA with Taiwan, many OFWs may soon be out of jobs soon. Taiwanese factories may opt to move to mainland China after the implementation of the ECFA, the envoy explained.

On the other hand, the Philippines will benefit from an FTA with Taiwan.

"We foresee great strides in the cooperation in agriculture, labor and investment, with more Filipino workers coming to Taiwan, and more Taiwanese investments flowing to the Philippines as well," Lee said.

There are about 100,000 registered OFWs in Taiwan who each earn around P20,000 a month and remit P600 million to the Philippines each year, he said.

"Taiwan provides OFWs equal rights and the same treatment as local Taiwanese employees," Lee added.

Bilateral trade between the Philippines and Taiwan amounted to more than $6 billion in 2009, making Taiwan the country's 6th most important trading partner.

As of June 2010, Taiwan's investments in the Philippines stood at $1.2 billion, making it the seventh largest foreign investor in the country, Lee said.

BUSINESS

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Gotianun going into power-generation business

Filinvest considering two clean coal-fired facilities

By Doris C. Dumlao

AYTOS BUILDING a furnace in property development, tycoon Andrew Gotianun is breaking into power generation to cater to rising households and industrial demand for electricity.

In a disclosure posted on the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Gotianun-led Filinvest Development Corp. said it was considering two potential clean coal-fired power generation projects, namely a 100-megawatt (MW) project in Luzon and another 150-MW project in the Visayas.

"PDCIs in the process of applying for permits from the relevant governmental and regulatory authorities and is in negotiation with potential equipment suppliers and potential power off-takers," the disclosure said.

With respect to the potential power project in the Visayas, FDC said it was conducting a feasibility study for a possible water desalination facility in the area that would be operated using off-peak power from the proposed power plant.

An expert in the Philippine telecommunications industry will be joining the

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PNB

SMC lists shares worth ₱65B

Shareholders guaranteed of 8% in annual dividends

By Doris C. Dumlao

SAN MIGUEL Corp. is set to list preferred shares worth P65.5 billion at the Philippine Stock Exchange today.

In a memorandum, the PSE said its board has approved the listing of 874.17 million San Miguel preferred shares with a par value of P5 a share.

San Miguel investors earlier converted their common shares into these fixed yield instruments. The preferred shares were issued on Oct. 5, 2009, priced at P75 a share, with an exchange ratio of one preferred share for every common share.

San Miguel's preferred shares will start trading under the ticker "SMCPA."

Of the total number of preferred shares to be listed, 34.65 million, or about 4.1 percent, are ready to be lodged with the Philippine Depository & Trust Corp. on the listing date.

Those lodged preferred shares will be eligible for trading.

Bulk of preferred shares that are not lodged with the PDTC will only be eligible for trading upon completion of the lodgment process, the PSE said.

The preferred shares, equivalent to over a quarter of San Miguel's outstanding stock, offer a guaranteed annual cash dividend rate of 8 percent.

Unlike common shares, preferred shares have the priority in terms of dividend payments and liquidation, but holders of these instruments do not enjoy voting rights.

The government, which controls a 34-percent block in San Miguel through the Presidential Commission on Good Government, was among those that accepted the said services.

Of all the participants in the exchange offer, the government held the biggest block of shares.

While key shareholders of San Miguel are optimistic about the conglomerate's long-term value prospects, the diversified holdings conglomerate, holders of preferred shares are the most conservative investors who want a guaranteed dividend rate.

Benguet eyes loan to expand gold mine

By Amy R. Borja

PUBLICLY LISTED Benguet Corp. yesterday said that its wholly owned subsidiary would tap a P336-million loan facility from the Philippine Export-Import Credit Agency (PhilExim) to finance the expansion of the Acupan gold mine.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Benguet assistant corporate secretary Reynaldo O. Mendoza said Benguet Resources Inc. already obtained PhilExim's approval for the five-year loan.

According to Mendoza, the loan will be secured by real estate assets of Benic and other subsidiaries of Benguet.

Benguet already formalized an agreement with Benic for the management and operation of the Acupan mine in Itogon, Benguet.

As project manager, Benic will manage the feed, operate the project and ensure proper debt service.

Under the management contract, Benic will likewise provide the necessary technical and financial assistance to more than double the production capacity of the gold mine to 300 tons/day.

Currently, Acupan runs produces 110 tons of ore a day with an average output of 100 ounces of gold a month. Recently, gold prices in the world market reached $1,410 per ounce.

Also contributing to Acupan's expansion is the P200-million private placement deal with PIM Darmex Management Corp.

Apart from Acupan, Benguet is also working on developing the Baloise Tailings Project.

The development was in line with the company's plans to expand gold production in Baguio.

Apart from its tailings projects, the company also said it had a number of exploration properties up its sleeve.

Contributing to Benguet Corp.'s bullish outlook was the recent surge in metal prices.

The prices are expected to sustain their current levels over the next few years.

According to the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines, metal prices are expected to improve through 2011 as global demand outstrips supply.

Demand comes mostly from emerging economies in Asia.

ICT spending seen to rise as economy grows

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THE RECENT improvements in the outlook for the Philippine economy will likely boost spending for information, telecommunications technology (ICT), as companies aim to be more globally integrated.

In a statement, the Institute of Electronics Engineers of the Philippines (IECEP) and ICT-enabled industries such as business process outsourcing (BPO) "would be one of the country's main growth drivers and sources of employment."

"This is coupled by increased spending for ICT projects and services in the Philippines due in part to investments made through public-private partnerships (PPP)," IECEP president Orson Vicente said at the opening of the International Electronics Conference & Exposition Philippines.

He said global ICT spending was expected to surge 0.7 percent, based on a report of the World Information Technology and Services Alliance.

Meanwhile, this will come from the Asia Pacific region, which is expected to post a 5.5-percent growth in ICT spending until 2018.

In the Philippines, ICT spending is expected to rise by 9.1 percent to 2015, up from an estimated 7.6 percent this year, a separate report by International Data Corp. showed.

"PPP projects, which range from road and highway infrastructure developments, building new airports and shipping terminals, and power and water supply projects could generate more business opportunities for local firms," Vicente said.

He said the positive outlook would likely bolster local ICT, electronics and engineering industries to continue providing products and services to cater to both the global and local markets.

BTr rejects tenders for 5-yr bonds

By Rachel W. Dartigo

THE BUREAU of the Treasury yesterday rejected all tenders for its latest offering of five-year bonds as buyers sought rates that would have pushed yields by some 23 basis points.

Had the Treasury awarded fully its T-bonds offer, the interest rate would have jumped to an average of 4.877 percent from a coupon of 4.625 percent.

Yesterday's offer involved a volume of five-year treasury bonds which were floated last month.

Lenders tendered a total of P6.695 billion, which was slightly over the offered volume of P6 billion.

The BTr yesterday had the option to limit the increase in yield at 0.6 basis points or an average of 4.271 percent, but this would have trimmed down the amount to be raised to only P412.5 million.

In an interview, Deputy Treasurer Edcarlo B. Mendiola said the market was probably focused on the ongoing bond swap offer, through which the BTr would issue new 10-year and 25-year T-bonds in exchange for matching securities.

"It appears that they were not bidding to win," Mendiola said. "Since the results were not in a volume we are regularly during auctions."

Rafael S. Algara, treasurer of Security Bank Corp., said in a separate interview that yesterday's bidding results served to show buyers of government securities that the Treasury was not allowing an increase to yields at this time.

"We now know that rates won't be going up," Algara said. "The results also showed that the government has enough cash in its hands."

Algara agreed that the ongoing bond swap offer might have influenced yesterday's auction.

The BTr last week launched this year's debt exchange program involving at least P600 billion-worth of 10-year and 25-year T-bonds, for which lenders have until Dec. 10 to submit their bids.

The bond swap for longer-dated debt paper is being made as part of the government's efforts to extend the maturity of its obligations.

In particular, the BTr wants to exchange at least P150 billion worth of new bonds issuing in 2016 and at least P50 billion worth of bonds maturing in 2035 for those that will mature earlier.

Mendiola earlier said the government was hoping that as much as P300 billion would actually be exchanged considering the strong market appetite.

He said the amount is about a tenth of some P3.6 trillion worth of government securities held by investors eligible for swapping.

Investors likely focusing on gov't bond swap offer

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'Shift' program gets ₱20-M seed fund

By Abigail L. Ho

THE TECHNICAL Education and Skills Development Authority has provided an initial P20-million funding to establish a training and scholarship program for would-be business process outsourcing industry practitioners.

The training will be undertaken under the Industry for Higher Information Technology Education (Shift) program.

BPO firms that would get successful referrals from the program would reimburse the training fee of their new employees, making the P20 million a revolving fund that could be used to train other personnel later on.

The Shift program is a collaboration among Trade, the Business Processing Association of the Philippines, and IT school Informatics.

In a presentation during the program's launch yesterday, Informatics chief executive Leo Rengan said the Philippines should not be contented with being the world's call center destination of choice, it should aim to provide higher value services.

"We don't want the Philippines to just be the call center capital of the world. We want to go up the value chain, to provide services such as Web design and animation, which pay more than medical transcription or para-call center services," he said.

He said that right now, the range of IT-related courses on offer were no longer matched with what the industry demanded.

"There's a sudden growth in IT-BPO demand, yet IT education has remained the same in most schools. There's a need for government intervention to shift this around," he said. "The curriculum being offered now will address the short-term needs of the industry, but schools have to offer more courses."

Under the Shift program, BPAP will use the Trade-provided funding to train qualified "near hires," or applicants for BPO positions who have potential but still lack some skills to qualify for a job in the industry.

BPAP will then refer graduates of the Shift training program to its member companies. It is estimated that scholars will then be worked out to make the program sustainable.

"The training program can't be offered to everybody, just the near hires who have attained a certain score. We want to focus on those with high potential," BPAP chief executive Oscar Salazar said.

According to the "IT-BPO Road Map 2011-2016: Driving Global Leadership," spearheaded by BPAP and the Department of Trade and Industry, a 820-billion, 900,000-employee industry would be achieved by 2016 with continued concerted industry effort and strong government support.

Gotianun going ...

From page B1

Filinvest group is taking Inc. Un implement its planned diversification into infrastructure and office projects, the company said in the disclosure.

FDC mentioned its plan to add infrastructure and utilities assets to its business portfolio in the light of a recently announced equity fundraising.

The holding firm recently obtained its shareholders' approval for the increase in its authorized capital stock by 15 billion to P17 billion to give the company leeway in raising fresh funds for expansion.

Specifically, FDC now has authority from shareholders to raise its authorized capital by issuing five billion common shares and two billion preferred shares, both with a par value of P1 per share.

Likewise approved was a top-up offering of up to three billion of FDC common shares worth more than P3.3 billion based on the current market price. The owner the controlling stockholder of FDC, the Gotianun of ALI Holdings Corp., will offer and sell to qualified investors three billion of its common shares equivalent to up to 40 percent of the company's stock. FDC will, however, issue afterward to ALI Holdings the same amount of shares that it sold, allowing new investors to come in at a lower may by borrowing shares held by the controlling stockholder.

ALI Holdings holds 3.76 billion shares or 76.7 percent of FDC. Including shares held in trust for a family member, the Gotianun group controls a total of 4.17 billion shares in FDC representing 85.26 percent of outstanding stock.

FDC has interests in property development, banking, sugar and hotel operations. Its subsidiaries and affiliates include Filinvest Land Inc. for residential property development, and Filinvest Alabang Inc., Festival Supermall Inc., Cyberzone Properties Inc., and Filinvest Asia Corp. for commercial property development.

It is also involved in financial services through Eastwest Banking Corp. and FDC Rizal Corp., while the sugar farming and milling businesses are handled by Pacific Sugar Holdings Corp., Tarlac Sugar Central Co. Inc., Granbest Sugar Central Co. Inc., and High Yield Sugar Farms Corp.

Seascapes Resort Inc. and Fiberglass Hospitality Inc. are FDC's subsidiaries for its ventures in the hospitality business.

GOINGS-ON

One of the world's best

NEW YORK–BRSK financial magazine Global Finance named Banco De Oro Unibank Inc. (BDO) as one of the World's Best Foreign Exchange Providers for 2015.

BDO is the runaway winner for the Philippines in the said category, joining its others from various countries. Global Finance editors with inputs from industry analysts, corporate treasurers and technology experts, handled the selection process for the best currency trading providers.

"Sovereign debt problems in Europe, China's monetary tightening and the Federal Reserve's quantitative easing are causing volatility in the foreign exchange markets. Corporations around the world need to select a strong, knowledgeable FX bank to help them cope with the for [illegible] of the markets," says Global Finance publisher and president Joseph D. Giarraputo in a statement.

PDIC accounting, treasury systems

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT Insurance Corp. recently signed a contract with Total Information Management (TIM) to implement an Integrated Financial System (IFS) that will replace its current semi-automated processes.

The project, which will run for six months, will be undertaken in two phases. The first involves the acquisition of an IFS that will modernize the Financial Accounting System (FAS) and Treasury Investment Management System (TIMS). This will integrate PDIC's current accounting systems as well as help in the prudential management of the Deposit Insurance Fund (DIF).

The second phase involves the integration of various systems related to PDIC's Human Resources Information System, Procurement Management System, Fixed Assets Management and Supplies Inventory Management System.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Marlon Achazo
(alias Marlon Santos)

Notice is hereby given that the person whose picture and name appear above, Mr. Marlon Achazo alias Marlon Santos (and other aliases which he may be using), is not connected with Sky Cable Corporation, or any of its affiliates or subsidiaries.

Mr. Achazo (or alias Mr. Santos) has been misrepresenting himself as a Technician of Sky Cable, and had been offering Cable TV services to unwitting subscribers particularly in Las Pinas and Sucat in Metro Manila.

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RE PUBLIKO

Governance Knowledge-Sharing Week: RePubliKo, kicks off Human Rights Consciousness Week Celebration

Commission on occasion in order to fully realize human rights. It is through the wealth of resources and the complete institutions of government that the basic requirements of all people are better ensured. Here, a government riddled with corruption and led by incompetent officials is hardly the right environment to foster progressional interventions for education, health, food, shelter and human security for all.

Human rights have a crucial role to play in achieving good governance as it puts the people at the very heart of governance itself. Justifying a strong affinity for human rights standards and principles across the Philippine bureaucracy is an important first step in eradicating the culture of corruption and shed almost all imagined power that has plagued it. At the same time, human rights provide the necessary framework – the inevitable guiding light – for our decision-makers.

The peculiar situation of our nation forces us to think how can we promote the interest of the Filipino people, especially those who are poor and disadvantaged? This question engages all our senses to see, feel, hear and heed the corrupt practices, injustices, inequalities and undemocratic tendencies that deprive our people of their dignity. It impels our hearts to action, to hold up with others, to take on the task and dig in for the sake of those whose rights are marginalized and whose voices are not included.

The CHR is grateful for organizations like the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for taking pains in promoting human rights, integrity, and justice in our society. Thanks to them, a creative collaboration such as a knowledge-sharing week entitled "RePubliKo: Ang Republika, Ang Publiko at Ako" is made available for the public to experience and appreciate.

The commitment of governments, civil society and international organizations to maintain the conducive environment to the fulfillment of human rights is important so that the lasting achievements and traditions are all there to assure our patrimony – to ensure that human rights are enjoyed by everyone, everywhere, at all times.

CHITO GASCON
Chairperson
Commission on Human Rights

My sincerest greetings go to all the participants of the 2015 Governance Knowledge-Sharing Week, with the theme, "RePubliKo: Promoting Human Rights, Integrity and Democracy".

The Supreme Court is pleased and honored to be a partner of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) in this year's RePubliKo: Ang Republika, Ang Publiko at Ako!. This event speaks highly of our deep sense of civic spiritedness in resolving for the best interests of our people, especially the poor and disadvantaged in our society.

As a staunch supporter of the United Nations Development Programme – Fostering Democratic Governance Programme (UNDP-FDG), the High Court has pursued several reforms intended to enhance access to justice, with a strong emphasis on such as gender mainstreaming and human rights now. Indeed, much has been achieved for the public good, as we cannot remain complacent as much more remains to be done.

I hope this occasion will inspire you to continue your work in enhancing the advancement of good governance principles in our surface-to-sensitive governance. Together, let us work tirelessly and unite in our common cause of defeating poverty and building a just and peaceful Philippines.

MARIA LOURDES P.A. SERENO
Chief Justice
Supreme Court

The Civil Service Commission is very proud to be one of the government institutions included in this inspirational event. Among the values espoused under RePubliKo is integrity in public service, which the CSC has wholeheartedly pursued vow the years and with various partners. One tie-up with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), particularly through such programs as Mainstreaming Governance in Participatory Governance, Integrity and Human Rights Education with the Super Lawal Action Foundation, Inc., and Building Integrity in Democratic Governance by Enhancing the Capacity of Partners and Civil Society with Transparency International Philippines or TIP, provided the impetus for building integrity among civil servants.

The Commission places premium on integrity as a critical imperative in human resource management. Integrity, public service has a built pass as two sad pats as hours. This cannot be achieved overnight. The coming of reform groups today strengthens that we are willing to work hard for the goals of RePubliKo. Even if the race is to move is strength with challenges, the CSC is unshakeable in support, we are one.

MA. ANITA O. PULIDO
Chairman
Civil Service Commission

I extend my sincerest greetings to the participants of "RePubliKo: Promoting Human Rights, Integrity, Justice and Democracy in the Philippines," a gathering that seeks to recognize the initiatives of national and local organizations in promoting good and transparent governance that values human rights, integrity, justice, and democracy.

Effective mainstreaming participatory governance are is contributing to an ever growing clamor for inclusive public governance. Indeed, people calling for greater democratic participation, open and political solutions are essential to a democratic system and is indispensable participation in all levels of governance.

With these, I congratulate the United Nations Development Programme and the people behind the #RePubliKo Development Road Fund. I'll I'm also thanking such a worthy endeavor.

The same appreciation goes to our very own Civil Governance academia for launching the "Nothing Fixes" that youth for people can be involved in governance.

All these efforts showcase our tireless strategy to accelerate democracy and governance reforms in the Philippines.

In this end, let us all commit ourselves towards the goal, for as tirelessly work together.

EMILIO C. OSIAS III
Secretary
Department of Interior and Local Government

Mga kababayan at mamamayang Pilipino, bahay at kanyo-kanyo tayong magkaroon ng magiging pananaw para sa kinabukasan ng ating kabuhayan ng Pilipinas. Ang pagtutulungan ng pamahalaan at pagpapatupad ng mga batas ay mahalagang pundasyon para sa mga mamamayang Pilipino.

Ang kabuhayan ay pamumuhay ng isang bansang umaasa at umaasa. Ang kabuhayan ng isang bansa ay nakasalalay sa kapakanan ng mga mamamayan at sa pagtupad ng mga batas. Kaya ang pagtutulungan ng pamahalaan at pagpapatupad ng mga batas ay isang malaking hakbang sa pagkamit ng pagkakaisa ng mga mamamayan. Ang isang pamahalaang makatutugon sa pangangailangan ng mga mamamayan ay isang pamahalaang may pagtutulungan at pagpapatupad ng mga batas.

Hindi kasi ang mamamayang ang Pilipino ay nagkaroon ng personal na pakinabang sa mahalaman. Ang mahalaman ang mga isang mahalagang pundasyon ng mga mamamayang Pilipino.

Kaya mga kababayan, mali akong mamamayan sa isang mahalagang Pilipino. Nasa-nasa isang pagbuhay ng mga bayan ay isang labi. Ano nilang pinahanan. Ito ang isang na pag-asa ng bayan. Ito ang isa ng isang mamamayang bayan ng Pilipinas.

Maraming salamat po.

Mabuhay ang bawat isang Pilipino. Mabuhay ang Republika!

MANUEL A. ROXAS II
Chairman
National Commission on Indigenous People

Congratulations to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and its partners from government, the private sector and civil society organizations as we all mark and celebrate very significant milestones in our collective pursuit for justice and advocacy for human rights, justice, integrity and democracy in the Philippines and the rest of the development world.

We, a lot remains to be done but we take stock of what we have accomplished and where we are headed, appropriately through this week long sharing and celebration of the collaborative partnerships and committed engagements that have nurtured, strengthened and sustained these advocacies. Surely, it is through a unified sensibility of shared commitments among citizens, governments and partners and institutions that we are individually and collectively make a difference.

The ARMM Inc. is both grateful and honored to be part of the institutional collaboration and engagement with the UNDP and its partners. Through the ARMM Projects that were supported by the UNDP – Rebuilding Communities Project Inc. for Rights, the ARMM FAST MARKET Project, etc.) we did not only strengthen our capacity to realize our mandate of improving public administration and governance education in the country but as well as engage students and core civil society organizations to participate in dialogues on the promotion of good governance. Through these engagements and encounters, we are constantly afforded the opportunity to improve and enrich the processes as well as contribute to the critical policy issues and advocacies for good, just and democratic public administration and governance in the country.

In behalf of ARMM, and our beneficiaries, among public and private institutions and partners and governance and democracy advocates, all over the country, I extend our encouraging continuing support hands with the UNDP and all the [illegible]

ZAIDAMIN L. MAUTE
Chairman
Autonomous of Islamic Affairs Administration in the Philippines, Incorporated

It is with both pleasure and pride that I very sincerely congratulate the organizers of RePubliKo: Ang Republika, Ang Publiko, in Mo. Phil. Some done a pre-season "accredited sharing week to mark the Human Rights Consciousness Week (December 4-10) and the International Anti-Corruption Day (December 9). It complements very well to the common advocacy and action of the United Nations System, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in particular, to promote the mainstreaming of human rights and values of integrity and transparency in governance and development.

We at UNDP have always maintained that human rights should always be at the heart of our support to the Philippines to achieve its development objectives as well as the Millennium Development Goals. This human rights based approach animates our work in the area of local governance, anti-corruption, access to justice, among others. We welcome the many fora and discussions organized throughout the month on various governance and human rights issues with experts and practitioners from the region. The topics include ensuring citizen's participation in governance, the role of civil society and international humanitarian law and strengthening youth participation at local governments and to effective governance the MDGs. The two other topics are leveraging science for greater access to justice for the poor and ensuring citizens' engagement in the post-MDG era. Specifically, we commend the good practices and the best lessons and delivered during the week.

The UNDP assures its national and local partners are doing our share to further promote and strengthen human rights, justice, integrity and democracy in the Philippines. This Lawyer takes Honorable Day (January 2016) to be opportunity for us to disseminate the best of all these [illegible]

Please let me congratulations again to our partners and the organizers of RePubliKo.

SOPHIE KEVIE
Country Director
United Nations Development Programme

Republiko: Ang Republika, Ang Publiko at Ako

Promoting the best interests of the Filipino public by calling for reforms in all aspects of governance, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), together with its partners, currently organized a governance knowledge-sharing week aiming to promote human rights, integrity, justice, and democracy in the Philippines.

Aptly titled "RePubliKo: Ang Republika, ang Publiko at Ako," the week-long event, which started on November 6 and will run until December 10, also underscores activities that hasten the awareness on human rights, access to justice, integrity in public service, and democracy and citizens participation.

In an interview with our news office, RePubliKo is a joint project between UNDP and the Government of the Philippines (GOP) together with its implementing partners and responsible parties under UNDP's Fostering Democratic Governance Portfolio.

The partners include the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), the Civil Service Commission, the Supreme Court of the Philippines (SC), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Commission on Audit (COA), the Ombudsman, the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and the National Economic and Development Authority.

As part of UNDP's priority programs, RePubliKo aims to be a preparation for the 2016-2017 National Human Rights Consciousness Week given that this will be the 65th year of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 15th year of the Right to Development.

Free rides

In behalf the socially-empowering event, RePubliKo brought to light how the government should act to ensure that human rights are respected, protected, and fulfilled with the theme, "Fostering Security Sector Accountability and Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law."

CHR, through its Chairperson Etta Rosales led the opening ceremonies and a forum-dialog with Santiago Cantón, executive secretary of Inter-American Commission on Human Rights; Jo Herman Reid, executive director of Institute for Strategic and Development Studies; and Atty. Jayne Reyes, co-chair of Human Rights and Peace Desk of Liberies.

On the second day, DILG discussed "Strengthening Youth Participation in Local Governance" with CHR, UNDP and SILG Undersecretary Jesse Robredo calling on for the expression of Filipino toward unity as citizens and Filipinos' sense of civic participation.

The head of the DILG was joined by second director of Leaves Del Norte representative Onofre Abad Santagata, and IMA News TV Web Producer, Ms. Pia Bautista and moderated by Ms. Tonyet Bautista, Executive Director, Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society (IMPACS).

Also, Atty. Emilio Osias, Commissioner of the Commission on Audit, Atty. Jose Balmaceda, Chairman of the Commission on Indigenous People, Mr. MAY RODRIGUEZ, Former Director, National Union of Journalists in the Philippines, Judge CELEDONIO ANG-ING A. (CONG), Deputy Clerk of Court & Judicial Affairs Program Administrator, Supreme Court of the Philippines.

Program management officer and moderated by Prof. ARNOLD MONOCAL, UP School of Economics.

Integrity

As one of the international days Corruption Day, 9 am, the United Nations' Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) will also marks its 7th year anniversary during the fourth day of the week-long event.

With the subject, "Financing Genuine' for, paperwork in Search for Trade," the Civil Service Commission will be presenting the chairperson of the Philippine Truth Commission and former Chief Justice Hilario Davide who aims to challenge all government units to act against corrupt practices, injustices, inequalities, and undemocratic practices that continue to deprive people's dignity and threaten the very core of democracy.

Joining him in the panel are Panamga Mayor Jesse Rodriguez, who is also the president of the League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP); Senator Teresa Oliveros, the spouse of the Social Watch Philippines, Helen Mongaya, Transparency director of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, and Vincent Lazatin, executive director of Transparency and Accountability Network.

Moderating the end dialogue is Time Magazine Writer, board of Directors Rule 183 and Integrity Initiatives Program head of MBN-CBN Foundation.

A Mixed Bout

Part of the governance knowledge sharing week is the Active Human Rights Quiz, which is a competition for socially-relevant films and which in less than the country's highly regarded directors.

The film for a synopsis of UNPRIA-Inspirations with CHR, UNDP the Embassy of Australia and Embassy of The Kingdom of The Netherlands.

Featured films are the John Brodie classic, Independence Day, as well as short films and full length independent films by directors Bell-Marie Meadows, Jeffrey Jeornes, Bill Hunt, Jade Castro, Francis Xavier Pasion, Arnold Reyes, Mikhail Red, Adolfo Alix Jr., and Chuthulichi Gutierrez, among many others.

Short animator film entries for the ALAB Short Film Competition will also be part of the Active Shots Film Festival.

Meanwhile, to add entertainment to a rather serious subject, Jose Javier and Sharon Leonard, Rabayo Band, Bayang Barrio, Gerlie Dhon, Juan Miro Dimzon, and Radioactive Sago Project will be bringing in a musical beat to cap off the National Human Rights Consciousness Week celebration.

In a word, RePubliKo is a flow of life. It encourages us to continue to act and give their role in a country that needs to be restored. And this will all be achieved through the rebirth of more a solid fight for human rights, freedom, and democracy.

Responsible Parties

KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

REPUBLIKO

Governance Knowledge-Sharing Week
RePublika: Kinds of Human Rights Consciousness Week Celebration

A Governance Knowledge Sharing Week
Promoting Human Rights, Justice, Integrity and Democracy
2-9PM, 7 December 2010, UP Film Center in Diliman, Quezon City

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MOTORING

Editor Joey N. Arcanes

Game Changers

25 of the most significant cars from the past 25 years

By Jason R. Arq

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS may be a mere eyeblink in history, but to an eon in the automotive world. Where model cycles are measured in typical four or five year spans, 25 years represents multiple generations of evolution, each superior (usually) to the preceding model.

Taken in that context, the progress of automotive technology has been slow and evolutionary, particularly when compared to how computers and gad-

(MORE) B2-3

Nissan Marks the "Dawn" of Modern Luxury with the All-New Teana 3.5L

Set to cater to the discriminating needs of a modern corporate executive, the all-new Nissan Teana recently stormed into the local automotive market with a world-class performance, prominent European design, class-leading hospitality and comfort, and a host of new features and options.

Already one of the most popular premium sedans in its segment, the new Teana has arrived to charmingly, boasting of a comprehensive suite of features built to deliver performance, versatility, and usability. Now, Nissan Motor Philippines, Inc. (NMPI) has beefed up Teana lineup with the introduction of the 3.5L variant, featuring the globally renowned VQ-V6 engine – the only engine to be included in the coveted Ward's 10 best engines list for 14 consecutive years.

At the heart of the all-new Nissan Teana is the concept of offering customers a dynamic and superior sedan with an attractive modern luxurious styling that is much more refreshing and easy on the eyes compared to other vehicles in its class.

"The all-new Nissan Teana 3.5L is meant to reflect NMPI's continually strong and undeterred commitment to constantly offer high-quality products that maximize the pleasure of driving, and the pride of owning a Nissan," NMPI President and CEO Allan Chua said.

Coined from the Native American word which carries the meaning 'dawn,' the Teana 3.5L denotes the beginning of an all-new modern luxury sedan. With its modern styling, impressive ride comfort and thoughtful appointments, the Teana was designed and engineered to provide lasting value to a luxury sedan reflecting a new dimension of hospitality, superb comfort and a quiet, spacious interior.

The all-new Nissan Teana has an artistic interior with wave-like design themes to further accentuate the modern luxurious appearance and mimic with an emphasis on comfort, relaxation, and sensuality. Key features of the all-new Nissan Teana's interior include a dashboard that 'floats' on top of a large wood panel to create a sense of being gently enveloped in high quality, an elegant floor console design with carved wood panel, sophisticated chrome finishing that creates a modern yet luxurious appearance, door grip handle which is based on the artistry yet ergonomic principles encompassing a wave-like line for a distinctively fresh look and feel, double-stitched leather door trim to showcase fine craftsmanship and voluminous interior offers safe-like comfort.

Relaxing Comfort

The all-new Nissan Teana sits on the newly developed Nissan D-Platform optimized for a class-leading ride comfort, low Noise, Vibration and Harshness (NVH), outstanding stability and superb handling. The driver helming the wheel of the rather sizeable Nissan Teana will take pleasure in fatiguefree driving while maintaining concentration, with passengers feeling truly relaxed while enjoying an amazingly smooth and quiet ride.

Driving comfort and stability are uncompromised with a new, fully independent Front Strut and Rear Multi-link suspension system. Quietness and refinement are precluded with the extensive use of sound absorbing materials over the entire body of the vehicle. Under the front bonnet of the all-new Nissan Teana is Nissan's award-winning 3.5L VQ35DE V-6 powerplant that produces 270ps at 6,000rpm with 330Nm of torque at 4,400rpm. This engine is mated to Nissan's Xtronic CVT (Continuously Variable Transmission) with Adaptive Shift Control (ASC), combining to offer responsive acceleration and a class-leading fuel economy while allowing the passengers to enjoy a comfortable ride with no shift shock at all vehicle speeds.

Welcoming Hospitality

The all-new Nissan Teana comes with premium features to pamper both driver and passengers with welcoming hospitality. Some of these key premium features are: dual-zone auto air-conditioning system, 6-CD changer with 6-speaker audio, Aux-in and MP3 receiver sound lighting, triple meter cluster with integrated Multi Information Display, audio/cruise control steering buttons, rear sunshade, powered front seats — 8-way adjustable driver's seat and 4-way adjustable for the front passenger seat, Intelligent Key (I-Key) for keyless operation, ventilated seats for the driver and the front passenger, Ottoman-style legrest support for the front passenger and panoramic sunroof.

The all-new Nissan Teana also provides the best-in-class boot/trunk space with a capacity of 466L, plus a flat trunk floor that does not intrude into luggage room, while a low bumper height makes loading and unloading of large items much easier.

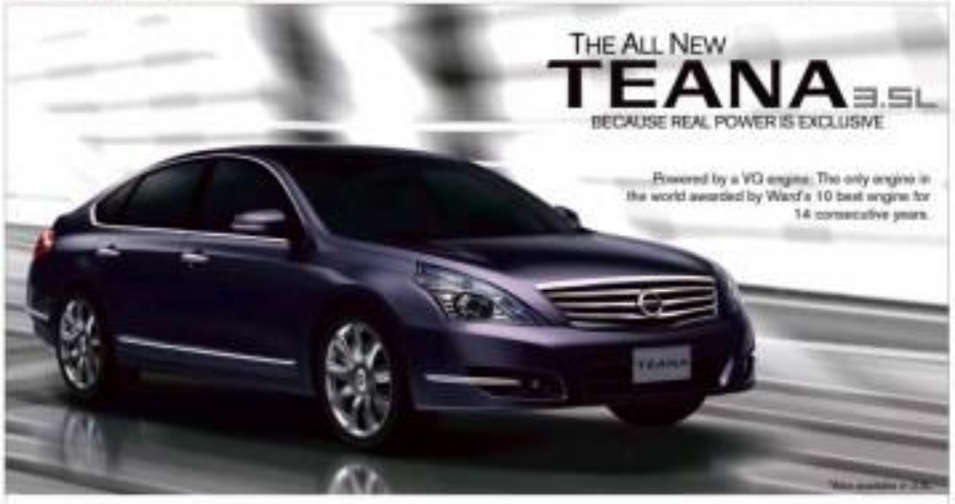
Advanced Safety Technologies

The all-new Nissan Teana delivers a full complement of safety features such as SRS Airbags, active front headrests, Anti-Brake Locking System (ABS), Electronic Brake Distribution (EBD), Brake Assist (BA), Vehicle Dynamics Control (VDC) with Traction Control System (TCS) and ultra-bright Xenon headlights with auto level-out are standard on the Teana 3.5L variant. All these features contributes to the Teana achieving the top safety rating of 6-Stars in the Japan New Car Assessment Program (JNCAP).

What's more, the Teana's rigid body structure is built with 980 MPA Ultra Steel with light weight and high strength characteristics similar with the French Nuclear submarine.

The all-new Nissan Teana 3.5L is offered with a choice of four attractive exterior colours: White Pearl, Sapphire Black, Deep Amethyst Purple, Brilliant Silver.

Experience the all-new Teana 3.5L, available at all Nissan dealerships nationwide.



TEANA

SHIFT_ the way you move

NISSAN MOTOR PHILIPPINES, INC.

Game Changers

from page B1

gets have evolved. Although we don't have flying cars with hydrogen-powered reactors yet, we do have subcompacts with features that would shame a luxury car from 1983. Fuel injection and emission-cut closely are commonplace. Anti-lock brakes and airbags are standard on all but the most basic entry-level models, and warranties last from three to an amazing five years and 150,000 km. Although prices have shot up by several multipliers—you can no longer buy an expensive compact at P500,000—so have vehicle owners and reliability.

With Toyota and Mitsubishi at the top of the sales charts, as they were more than 25 years ago, you might think that the industry is going much the same. But the reality is that there are massive changes underway. Import from Korea and China (particularly the cars from Hyundai) are becoming more popular, and have caught up and surpassed some previously unassailable Japanese brands. SUVs and MPVs are more popular than passenger cars. It used to be a given that the most popular models would be mid-level ones. Now, that is no longer the case. Even as the economy recovers, the local automobile industry is in danger of stagnating, unlike in neighboring Thailand and Indonesia.

From the dozens of car models launched in the Philippines since 1985, a few cars stand out by being the most influential on the market or the perception of a brand, by containing major technical innovations, or by simply being exceptionally good—or spectacularly bad. Here is our list of 25 of the most significant cars from the past 25 years of economy. These are the cars that stirred our passions, kept us awake at night, or at least got wanted us to pull out our checkbooks.

1988 Nissan Sentra: The car marked the beginning of the invasion of midsize sedans from Japan in the Philippines. It may seem unbelievable now, but the Philippine car market was starved of new car models for nearly five years, as the Marcos era came to its troubled conclusion. Nissan was the first to launch a new car in the local market. Anyone who wanted a new compact car in 1988 had only one choice—the Sentra. Fortunately, it had a roomy, front-wheel-drive design and features, and up-to-date engines, including a very frugal diesel, something uncommon in this class

1988 Nissan Maxima: The big brother of the Sentra, the Maxima laid out the template for all Philippine midsize cars that followed. After this, no midsize sedan car could do without power steering, door locks, windows and mirrors. The 3.0-liter inline-four paired with five-speed gearbox and front-wheel drive delivered spirited performance. And so importantly, the Maxima looked the part, with a dignified exterior and plush cabin.

1990 Toyota Corolla 1.4GL: The Corolla marked the return of the 800-pound gorilla nameplate, Toyota, in the Philippines market, and the reintroduction of its most popular model. Ironically assembled in Japan, the Corolla featured a 1.8-liter twin-cam 16-valve engine, the first mass-market road 16-valve in the Philippines. During the early 1990s, it seemed that every family had a Corolla 16-valve in their garage. In succession, paved the way for Toyota's domination of the local market.

1991 Toyota Tamaraw: Toyota's return could not be complete without the Tamaraw. It became the default taxi and disaster vehicle, transporting office workers and students in the relative comfort of its air-conditioned cabin. It was so popular that the Tamaraw's FX designation became a generic term; we could hardly believe it when Toyota announced they would use the Tamaraw to lower of its

2005 Toyota Prius

1996 Honda City

into MPV.

1992 Mitsubishi Galant GTI-16V: Mitsubishi undoubtedly relied this a superstar in its sales manual. That rose by stretching it a bit, but it was undoubtedly one very attractive performance car. Starting with a 2.0-liter 16-valve twin-cam fuel-injected engine (the first local car to gain the new technology), it all-wheel drive, an aerodynamic body kit, and a wide wheels. Just as importantly, it sported the new look of the Galant VR4, to all its rear spoiler, front air-dam, side-skirt glory.

1992 Kia Pride: Based on an old Mazda model (a Fiesta, no less), Kia introduced the Pride as the "People's Car." It had a very low initial cost, but little else to recommend it. The poor reliability and performance of the "Kia Shame" would attract a legion to the brand and Korean cars in general at that even now are hampering their acceptance as world-class vehicles.

1996 Honda Civic: The Honda Civic was moderately successful since it first launched, but this was the generation that made brands a runaway success. What the Corolla was one generation earlier, the so-called big-eyed Civic became for Honda: a cool compact that was suitable for executives as well. The Civic was roomy, comfortable, and a blast to drive. And the 160-hp Civic SiR became the Philippines' first pocket rocket.

1998 Honda CR-V: Before the CR-V came along, there was only kind of 2.0-liter executive car: a midsize sedan. Then the CR-V, with its sit-in-like ride, comfortable interior and tall driving position, defined the preferred choice in this price class, particularly for the ladies. Today, midsize executive cars are no longer popular, but compact crossovers are thriving.

2001 Hyundai Starex: If Toyota's empire was built on the Tamaraw and Corolla, Hyundai's was built on this. And to think that the first generation of Starex vans was imported by the gray market, with no factory support whatsoever. Even then, the Starex easily thrashed the Mitsubishi Space Gear, with which it shared a platform. Hyundai got that right by officially selling the Starex in to need up-to-date cars, and providing the appropriate warranty and service support.

2001 Toyota Corolla Altis: Corollas were dependable transportation, but by no stretch of the imagination were they sexy. Then came the Corolla Altis to all its Bad Boy pruning. Sadly this is an ongoing theme. The Corolla was rebranded as a mini-luxury sedan, thus breaking the stranglehold of the Honda Civic for a couple of years. The Corolla was still not sexy, but became much more desirable.

2002 Honda CR-V: The second-generation Honda CR-V is memorable for two things: for exposing the ridiculousness of Philippine tax regulations, and, for many Honda loyalists, destroying the brand's prestigious image. The reason is that Honda managed to squeeze 110 mm into the compact SUV chassis, allowing it tax-free status. A CR-V with 636 and disc brakes first managed to sell for less than P1 million. On the negative side, the "tax-cheater" layout made it uncomfortable and the cheap interior materials rendered it unpleasant.

2002 Isuzu Crossroad SUV: We were underwhelmed skeptical when Isuzu launched the Crossroad SUV soon after Honda introduced the second-generation CR-V. Which would you choose: a lifting up SUV or stills around be the Philip-

pine market, or a car based (sniped) crossover with ABS and airbags and that scores world standards? With similar pricing, it seemed like a no-brainer. It was soon proven that the folks at Isuzu know a thing or two (and that the press knows nothing) as Isuzu's about selling in the Philippine market, as the SUV proved popular and underdog Isuzu's headquarters already took notice the SUV is the only Philippine-made vehicle to have been displayed at the Tokyo Motor Show.

2003 BMW X5: Before the BMW X5, SUVs were about crawling through rocks and wading through rivers. Instead, true to its performance roots, BMW made the X5 as good as its sedan siblings on the road. It was all luxury brands worth their hood ornaments have a performance SUV as part of their line-up.

2004 Ford Everest: Utility vehicles based on pickup trucks had been made before, but it was left to Ford to introduce a people SUV with optional four-wheel drive. The Everest featured three rows of three facing seats (sold on top of the line Limited edition), a wide rear of seats, did not disappoint.

2004 BMW 3 Series: There were hardly any sport cars in the Philippine market 10 years ago, but if you had a BMW 3 Series, there was really no need for one. Its responsiveness, precise rear-wheel drive chassis could shame many sporty cars, while still carrying four in comfort. Its inline six engine was as smooth as silk and produced a spine-tingling roar when pressed hard.

2005 BMW X3/06: BMW made a daring move by introducing the new 3 Series with only one engine choice—a diesel. This luxury car fanatic banished the idea that diesels were only for trucks and jeepneys. The innovative engine produced allowed spectacular performance while returning km/liter figures in the double digits. The X's avant-garde styling may not have withstood the test of time, but no luxury car lineup can be considered complete nowadays without a diesel variant.

2006 Mazda5: Compact vans were shunned when packing in luxury features, getting heavier and less enjoyable to drive. Then Mazda5 came along to reinvent the three-row compact van. Its sporty, edgy styling and fun-to-drive character made it the first of many minivans to be an inherent part of the equation. With its sharp-edged looks and dynamics to match, the 5 represented a resurging, newly focused Mazda.

2009 Toyota Innova: We couldn't understand why Toyota wouldn't continue the Tamaraw name for its people carrier, until the recipe came off this new model. Indeed, it was a world away from its predecessors, and its competitors; only a completely new nameplate would do. A new look exterior, modern interior and up-to-date engines finally put us on the AUV class and created a new bestseller.

2005 Ford Everest

2006 Ford Focus: In a market where Japanese-designed compacts rule, Ford introduced its European bestseller, the Focus. Featuring a sweeping exterior, particularly for the hatchback version, the Focus brought sophisticated engineering and refinement to the compact class. It slowly caught on, particularly after the introduction of the diesel model.

2006 Honda City: After establishing the model's reputation with the first-generation City, Honda came out with a redesigned subcompact for the second round. Continuing a sporty/sport high-output engine with a continuously variable transmission, the City punished what a subcompact could do in terms of space, comfort, and flexibility. Its trunk carried a massive 300 liters and its flexible seating gave it the cavernous capacity of a small SUV. It set a bench for lowest-fit function, which may not have helped its market acceptance.

2006 Subaru Impreza WRX: The Japanese superstars part was just a pipe dream until the car came along. After languishing under the G11 models, the brand finally was done justice by a new distributor. Such high performance was never this affordable.

2008 Mazda6: Japanese-exclusive cars have a mixed bag of hearts until the 6 came along. With its fourth cause a large engine and improved styling, cocketing it to the top of its class and car of the best houses. It also ended the trend of the sophisticated Japanese executive car. Innovative models from Mazda and its rivals are all on the horizon.

2009 Audi R8: Mid-engined sports cars were invariably bad, until the R8 came along. With its space frame chassis, high-revving V8 engine, the R8 is a supercar for the new century. Its interior is as ergonomic and user-friendly as its audio and instruments.

2009 Toyota Prius: Is buying a hybrid a profit at? Based on the Prius' sticker price and the resulting 1.5 million km/75 years to recover your investment in fuel costs, apparently it is not. When driving the Prius, it's best to avoid vision water and other economy cycle. It's a subpar car, but Toyota did the right thing to introduce the car. The technological advantages are undeniable, and hopefully Toyota can bring that unshakable price down by the time the next model comes around.

2010 Hyundai Genesis Coupe: As it introduced new models, Hyundai's cars became quite acceptable for transportation purposes but were not in any way truly desirable. Then the Genesis Coupe arrived and changed the perception of the brand. The coupe presented the brand's relative affordability, but provided expensive sports car experience with its rear-wheel drive/chassis.

Keeping 25 in mind

By Bobbi Sarmiento

WITH THE Philippine Daily Inquirer celebrating its 25th birthday anniversary, we thought of some motoring related tips to help make your motoring life easier, more enjoyable and more convenient.

1 **Drive with a plan or schedule in mind**—before leaving the house and jumping into your car, think of all the activities you need to do, all the places you need to visit and consider the traffic. Even the most hard-of-heart can still be convinced to do it in traffic if you just jump in blindly and join the fray. Assessing your activities will help you map out a route that minimizes time spent on the road, helps you think of alternative routes and ultimately avoid traffic, upending how many on the road and more time driving without which to do it.

2 **Avoid the rush hour**—rush hour starts as early as 7 a.m. and can unravel all the way to noon on paydays, and starts again at 6 p.m. all the way to 9 p.m. Since you know this already avoid traveling at these time slots so you can maximize your day, play or time with your loved ones. As an example, if I need to go north to south via Edsa, I usually leave right before noon 1 p.m. or 5 p.m. as traffic is significantly lighter during these times.

3 **Commute if you can**—while I love motoring, I will say that in the right traffic, commuting if I had a super-remote Supreme This Christmas season, the least means of transportation when going shopping is via the Edsa MRT3. The MRT3 connects Trinoma Mall to North Edsa QC, Shangri-La Mall in Mandaluyong, and Ayala Center in Makati. The MRT3 is very easy to use and train out, serving lower Manila now to a standstill as you move along at Edsa's above it all makes you feel very smug and smart.

4 **Carpool**—save gas, save your energy, save your time and save on your car.

5 **Then rid of all the junk inside your car**—a car is a means of transportation, not a locker room or a mood. Every little bit of junk kept inside the car weighs it down so get rid of them all. Mostly, the only things you should always have in your car is a spare tire, complete set of tools and jack, rags to lie down on when working on the car, mechanic's gloves and maybe a bottle of distilled water. Use your smoky clothes and shoes and other sports gear on unless you need them.

6 **Aerodynamic efficiency is more important than HORSEpower**—while I admire people who surf, bike and do other outdoor activities, leaving your gear and the accompanying rack exposed on your vehicle's roof will increase aerodynamic resistance or drag. But 1,000cc/h this becomes a serious impediment to achieving good fuel efficiency on slow down, or if you don't need them, take them off from your car on your daily commute.

7 **Have your doors, hood, bumpers and trunk aligned and fitting snug by a body shop**—over the years, your car's chassis takes some abuse. The doors become misaligned, the bumper starts falling off due to minor dings and the fenders don't wear away in their mounting nibs. All these small things add to aerodynamic drag as your car is rushing all of the incoming air through the gaps created by misaligned body parts. Have them harmed or, aligned and reinstalled properly. Your car will not only be more fuel efficient but will look better as well.

8 **Buy a map or GPS navigation**—buying either item will help you improve your familiarity in a certain area so you can map out alternative routes in case traffic is really bad. In my experience, sometimes the shortest and longest route is also the quickest, easiest, least traffic and hassle-free route to your destination.

9 **When going to the mall, go early**—almost is a Christmas time, shopping will be on your priority list. Head out to the malls early so you can park immediately and in a good location then hang out at a coffee shop while waiting for the mall to open. The time spent waiting is worth it.

10 **Pump up those tires**—poorly inflated tires can account for as much as 20% difference in fuel consumption, not to mention increased wear and tear on your car's drive train and engine. Typically start at 32psi and add all around for most regular sized passenger car tires, about 35psi cold for high-performance low profile tires and 38V / touch tires and adjust from there, based on my preference and the tire manufacturer's recommendation. As a guideline, I try to inflate the rear and if they are as perfectly round as possible as a good starting point. If the tire is more than 5 psi cold however, it is a good idea to replace those tires as old tires, despite their tread depth and condition, have already stored and are beside maintaining in PSI, space and are thus unsafe to use.

11 **Change the fluids**—as you regularly change your engine oil well the car specifies you can find, which is always good. But when was the last time you changed the gear oil or ATF fluid for your transmission? How about greasing the CV joints to reduce binding, or the wheel bearings to reduce friction? What about replacing or servicing the self-lubricating rubber bushings for your propeller shaft of your SUV or AWD / 4WD car? If any of these parts are binding or causing excessive friction, your car as a whole is not being as fuel efficient as it can be.

12 **Change your filters**—I've said it so many times and I'll say it again. Change your filters and pay particular attention to the fuel filters which are often ignored and left abuse. There are two of them, the primary fuel filter usually located underneath the car or near the engine bay and the fuel pump pre-filter which looks like a sock attached to the base of the fuel pump. Change both items and you'll be amazed at how much more fuel efficiency your car will be, not to mention more powerful and responsive. It's also a good time to clean the fuel tank and have it thoroughly cleaned inside and out. You'll be surprised at the amount of dirt and gunk floating around your fuel inside the fuel tank.

13 **Check your air-conditioning settings**—most people just leave it at maximum cold setting and / or maximum fan speed. Its air-conditioner system works most efficiently right below its maximum capability. Lower your thermostat or temperature setting between 20-23 degrees Celsius or about 68F to 72F, and dial the blower speed ¼ of the way from maximum speed. It will not only cool the inside of your car faster, but it will prevent from generating excessive heat in the engine bay and not cause wear and tear on your a/c components. The a/c system in most cars is driven by the engine itself, so reducing load on the engine by reducing the operating output of you're a/c will itself help increase fuel efficiency.

14 **Buy yourself a new fuel efficient car**—while not everyone can afford to plunk down serious cash for a new car, treating yourself to one will really minimize all your anxieties since a new car will be much more reliable than your old beater, plus it will be more fuel efficient thanks to advancements in technology.

15 **Check your wheel alignment and have it reset to factory specifications**—much like underinflated tires, misaligned tires pointing in different directions will greatly impact safety and stability under adverse conditions, increase wear on the tires and fuel consumption as well due to the car always trying to fight off tires scrubbing and resisting going straight.

16 **Replace your oxygen sensors**—an electronically fed injected car uses a variety of sensors to calculate how much fuel it needs to inject into the engine and the oxygen sensor is one of them. An oxygen sensor is typically good for 3 years under normal use and then it wears away since it is subjected to extreme heat on the exhaust. A poor reading oxygen sensor will not give the proper voltage reading to your car's engine control unit, thereby increasing the amount of fuel it is dumping precisely into the engine. Install a good replacement oxygen sensor which is significantly cheaper than those available from the dealership.

17 **Increase your car's visibility and awareness to other motorists**—including a louder horn, front and rear fog lamps and all-weather (usually gold or yellow colored light bulbs) help improve visibility of your car particularly for other motorists and pedestrians, as well as increasing your own visibility during adverse driving conditions. The reason why so many drivers have their guard if used with halogen type lenses. Halogen lenses are basic, a good, powerful beam that can penetrate through pollution and even pedestrians will help save lives and property. Just don't abuse the beam.

18 **Put on some window tint**—modern window tints help reduce heat and light penetration into the cabin, particularly harmful UV rays while still providing very good optical clarity and consistency. Solar Gard's GX Series is one such example and although very expensive, lasts three times as long as regular-dyed film based window tints. Your car's interior will be cooler, your a/c unit will be less stressed, and you'll be driving deeper into the glowing bubbly beer. As another benefit, window tints help reduce chances of break-ins because the rims can hide the shape and integrity of the windshield and windows for a limited time, hence robbers will more on if the job isn't easy for them. Just don't tint your dark tint at home. That's so 90's.

19 **Change your windshield wipers**—when was the last time you checked the condition of your windshield wipers? Those are probably old, brittle and have already started to smudge on your windshield. Replace your wipers immediately.

20 **Distilled water is not only good for you**—distilled water is also very good for your car! Use it for your radiator, never mineral or even purified water. Water is the best natural liquid heat exchanger—how efficient you'll be already and realize how quickly. Use it also for your windshield washer reservoir, and for owners of Subarus and Evos, the intercooler water spray. The minute particles found in purified and mineral water, and especially tap water can clog the nozzles or worse, the small high-pressure pumps of the washers.

21 **Have your windshield, windows and headlamps** lenses detailed—due to stone chips, acid rain, tree sap and bird droppings, the clarity of all transparent materials in our car is eroded, causing poor performance. Detailing companies such as Meguiar's and Auto Glym have a product for cleaning and buffing out your windshield, windows and headlight lenses to restore maximum clarity and effectiveness. This will help you see better in adverse conditions, and allow your headlamps to penetrate the dark better.

22 **Always keep the following** in your car—auto fuse book, workman's gloves, extra clothes and a mat / rags always have with you a mobile phone charger for your phone's, a pair of easy to wearing devices (red and amber), a first aid kit, a set of jumper cables to restart a dead car battery, towing rope and / or a pneumatic compressor with a light with extra batteries, a roadmap and a listing of all the major emergency hotlines stored in your phonebook and in a piece of paper inside your car. Of course, copies of your car/user and updated OR/CR registration should always be kept inside your car.

23 **Enroll in a proper high-performance driving clinic**—while intimidating at first, this is not necessarily easy to enter by with, the Toyota Racing School, the Nissan Racing Family and other professional race car drivers offer high-performance driving classes, not necessarily geared towards motorsports, but also towards honing your driving skills and honing your reaction times.

24 **Join a track day**—driving on the track is a most liberating experience, you'll feel it overwhelming at first. But driving on the track in the only manner you'll have to experience the outer limits of your car's ability, and the limits of your set, in an environment that will not endanger innocent people. Think you're a hot-shot? Then enroll in a driving clinic, try your skills out on the track then join those time attack / autocross events. Check out the Philippine Motorsports Federation's schedules.

25 **Use the right fuel for your car**—some people just keep on loading up with fuel without thinking about what their cars need. A high performance sports car needs high octane fuel such as Petron's Blaze 100, and premium 97. Diesel engine equipped cars such as The Toyota Innovas, Mitsubishi Montero Sports and Hyundai Santa Fe and Tucson will benefit greatly by using Bennett's Turbo Diesel and Shell's V-Power Diesel fuels, formulated specifically for modern CRDi engines. Using the right fuels will help keep your engine cleaner, perform better and last longer. Likewise, if you own a regular-man-market car like a Vios, Civic etc., the benefits to cost argument might not be worth it for you on high octane fuels to gain added performance.

AH DAD she rush hour and use the right fuel for your car.

PUMP up those tires.

MAKE it a point to join a track day.

WINDSHIELD
CRACK REPAIR
NOT REPLACEMENT! SAVE 50%
MANILA MONARCH
OPEN ON SUNDAYS!

GET rid of all the junk inside your car. It's not a locker room or a mood.

ORIGINAL LEATHER
Christmas PRICE DROP!
Prices Start at P12,000 per set
CARSEAT REUPHOLSTERY

Send your feedback:
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E-mail: ja_motoring@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Jang R. Arzaga

MOTORING

Back to the 80's

Remembering the automotive gadgets and gizmos we had 25 years ago

By Alvin Uy

AS WE celebrate Inquirer's 25th birthday, Inquirer Motoring turns back the clock and look at some of the automotive gadgets and related fixtures of the mid-1980's. The 80's were hard times for the automotive industry, it spelled the end for a number of car brands as we continue to feel the ill effects of poor fuel economy and political instability after the assassination of Ninoy in 1983. Even brand new cars were a luxury, and so were electronic gadgets. There are quite a number of automotive related icons that have kept us company during these times.

The Digital Years...The 1980's welcomed the age of digital mobile entertainment as products like the Discman were introduced in the mid-80s, just less than a decade after the cassette-based "Walkman" craze. Here are a couple of products that people in the 80s had for their mobile entertainment:

Watchman

Sony's FD-210 Watchman was Japan's first portable TV which had a grayscale 2-inch display screen. Weighing around 600 grams, it was introduced around the mid-80's with a retail price of 54,800Yen. Although it had very poor reception, it was a great conversation piece. From the Edsa Revolution in the various coup attempts in the late 80's, it was practically the only way to get TV news coverage on the road.

Discman

The D-50 Discman was Sony's first portable CD player, launched in Japan in 1984. Due to the poor quality of cassette tapes, the Discman offers digital quality sound and with the use of an adapter that looks like a cassette tape with wires. The user will just insert the adapter in the cassette slot and plug the wire on the Discman to get CD quality audio.

Best Car and Sci-fi flick back in 1985

Sci-fi movies were popular in the 80's, as space exploration and new technology were among the favorite themes. Movie makers saw the strong appeal of cars being used in Hollywood blockbuster movies like the James Bond, Jihad Max, Christine, Cobra and the following movie was one of the most popular for that year. The movie was called Back to the Future, produced by Steven Spielberg and starring Michael J. Fox and Christopher Lloyd, the film is the start of a trilogy movie about the story of Marty McFly, a teenager who accidentally went back in time from 1985 to 1955. He meets his parents in high school, accidentally screwing his mother's romantic interest. Marty must repair the damage to history by causing his parents to fall in love, while finding a way to return to 1985. When made a popular among car enthusiasts was the other star of the movie—a 1980's Delorean "gull-wing" car converted into a time machine that brings Marty McFly to and from 1985.

In 2009, Steven Spielberg produces another sci-fi movie flick with a shabby automotive theme and which was a sequel to the original 2007 movie Transformers. Aside from Shia LaBeouf and the adroy Megan Fox, the other stars of the show were cars voiced-by from General Motors—the all-new Camaro starring as "Bumblebee," the GMC Topkick Pickup as "Ironhide," a Chevrolet truck that starred as "Optimus Prime" and a Saleen S281 that starred as the evil robot "Barricade."

Video (arcade) killed the Radiostar in the 80's

Back then, music and movies were the central form of analog and digital entertainment via radio and television shows. However, with the growing popularity of home-based video games and mall-based video arcades, entrepreneurs were out for those the minds of video game designers. Hard Drivin' was a video arcade game using a sports car driving wheel and speed control situated in the late 80s. This was the first game that featured the first 3-D polygon driving environment in a simulator cabinet using customized program architecture. It was considered the most realistic car video game of its time with state-of-the-art force feedback, car physics simulation and game design. Other games like Pole Position and Out Run are classic examples of driving games using 2-D games.

Gran Turismo 5 is the fifth edition of the popular video game Gran Turismo race simulator series. Developed for Sony Computer Entertainment, it was released for Playstation 3 recently and this is the first version to feature online races for 16 players.

More than 1,000 car models will be featured in the game with 28 different locations and 71 different tracks, some with night racing feature. The game also features official licensees from Porsche officially Champs-coating (#911), Nissan and Jaguar GT for the first time.

Chapard's journey of a thousand miles that began in the 80's

In the late 80's famous Swiss watch company Chopard teamed up with Mille Miglia, the world-famous Italian rally whose high-ly collectible vintage and classic cars together with famous personalities take part. To mark the partnership, Chopard has manufactured the tradition of developing a new special edition Mille Miglia timepiece every year since 1988. The 2010 model is extraordinarily recognizable due to the outsized bubble Dauphine hands, pattern watering rings, silver with a touch bigger 44 mm diameter steel case housing a self-winding chronograph chronometer certified movement. Although several versions have been introduced over two decades, the basic design remains the same.

New comes the iPod Generation

Apple launched the first iPod back in October 2001, and the new generation iPod includes several variants including iPod Touch, Nano, iPodTile, Classic and the iPhone, providing huge storage space up to 160GB of music and video. Using flash memory instead of the more vulnerable disc format, Apple's iTunes software can be used to transfer music to the devices from computers using certain versions of Apple Mac and Windows OS. One thing prevalent the units—providing clear and high quality output to the end's on board music interface (sound). Most current ones in the market now offer some form of connectivity with MP3's to iPods that allows the driver to plug-in and play their favorite playlist while in traffic.

While the iPod provides audio entertainment, on board video entertainment was made possible since the late 1990's with the introduction of LCD screens mounted on the headrests and headrests, providing the audio-video entertainment. The technology has since improved to incorporate touch-screen features as well.

MOTORING 25

Quick as silver: 25 fast, festive starts

By Tessa R. Salazar

IN ANY motor race, everyone wants to make it to the first turn first. There's something about being first—it's more than just winning, and it's more of making that indelible mark in history. So, here are the 25 first placers in commemoration 25 years of the Inquirer and 14 years of Inquirer Motoring.

The first time Inquirer readers saw a page with the masthead "Motoring" was on March 21, 2006 (a Friday). This first formal Motoring issue was a black and white one-pager on Page 12, with no by-lines. The first section Low interest rates at a stand-out fair, Tire aid program set by Sime Darby and Nissan forges auto recall ranks. The news Orbit includes Honda motorcycles, August profits, Fuji auto, and General Motors layoffs.

QUICK 10-1

AUG. 21, 2006 issue of the Inquirer Motoring Section

PDI publisher Sandy Prieto-Romualdez awards one of the motoring exam in the Philippine International Motor Show. They are, second from right, Jong Arcasas, Benchi Santos, Aida Montoya, Tess Salazar and Alvin Uy. Not in photo are Charlie Bulan and Jason Ang.

The more affordable Panamera is now here.

The new Panamera V6.

Yes, we can achieve realistic goals without losing out on the fun along the way. Sure as with the 3.6-litre naturally aspirated 40 engine in the new Panamera. Highly efficient, extremely sporty and surprisingly affordable. With an enhanced fuel economy of 11.7km/l and 300hp of power. Thanks to direct fuel injection (DFI), available as standard, VarioCam Plus and the optional Porsche Doppelkupplung (PDK) including Auto Start-Stop function. Values that can be achieved with Porsche Intelligent Performance.

Come and visit our showroom to schedule your test drive or know more about our flexible **Porsche Ownership Program**. Receive a Porsche gift for every test drive.

PORSCHE

Porsche Center Philippines

Quick as silver: 25 fast, festive ...

From page B1-1

2 The first car to land unscathed in the first story I got to cover: that of Nissan Philippines' Yvonne Yao, as the company test hurtles chew. "She straightened up nicely in the corners with an equal number of cigars from both to local and foreign consumption."

3 The first ads that appeared in the Motoring section (March 21, 1986) was of Mitsubishi Galloper's first anniversary bonus offer ("Easy as Yen"), and rather robbing of veiled Bataan, which would make drivers wonder if the Galloper was the best name for the "Hay most highest location drive per rush hour", was really as evident before.

4 Though Emil Garcia's ads dominated the broadsheet's inner pages, as far as the advertisements went, Goodyear clearly won the two photos depicting *Goodyear's Farm* v2, the standard tire of the Porsche 959, and the molded polyurethane dolphin made by Goodyear secured on the front end of a 1986 Lincoln Continental at Forth Wayne, Michigan, assembly plant.

5 On March 27, 1986, the Motoring section pub. lished the first story on the "Free Mobility" program by Takeshi Ashimitsu the nissanes and Ernest Gorrick's production, Isuka Isuzi, offering free car checking and repair for motorists traveling south during the Holy Week break.

6 The first mention of the Supplier's Toyota Gallery was on the March 27, 1986 issue. The 1986st date-lined UPI wire story described the car "For its 14th birthday Toyota must have enrolled in Celosa GTS in a Geneva club. Its body is more attractive but it still needs some muscle. The rest, the Celica continues to Tweet 16 with a new anodynamic shape, a switch to front-wheel drive, and a more powerful 16-valve engine producing 16 valves!"

7 Aida Sevilla Mendoza, the section's first motoring enthusiast, matured her "On the Road" on April 3, 1986, and since then, has never been off it. Her first topic was titled "10 cars prove mettle" and she writes about the painfulling March 29 to 23 Marlboro Mahindra International Rally.

8 In the same column, Mendoza made the first mention of a local rally team driving a locally manufactured unit. The Aztlex Hyperactive was powered by a Isuzu 4ODIC 1.8-liter engine tuned by Jun Magno with Eric Pelma as navigator for the "Shoelace Mahindra International Alcohol Motor Rally." The unit was developed by Cargo Cars Inc entrepreneur Singky Viera and the Automotive Engine Rebuilders with cylinder heads modified by Hendricks.

9 Incumbent Motoring's first motoring editor was Mofardo Garcha, whose name appeared in the section on April 16, 1986. Garcha held the post for almost a year and a half. A one-man team, Ulanday oversaw the then-3 he attended car shows and press conferences alone. And he had no car back then.

10 Incumbent Motoring had its first issue of "spot color" on June 30, 1986. The photos were colored in the issue but the ads of the Mitsubishi Lancer GLS Limited, Goodyear FL tires and the Land Rover service shops were still on black and white.

11 After Ulanday, several successors took the wheels. Bill Davis was former business editor Samuel Salisbury and Lee Dronsella, then Gene Blanco, who was also editor of People, Events, and Products, Interior and Health, Real Estate and the Agriculture sections, took over, and would eventually be its editor for the next two decades. Leo Magno, a pioneer in information technology journalism, was then asked to go on board as Incumbent Motoring's first—and only—assistant editor from 1999 to 2005.

12 Incumbent Motoring's first coverage was Bonnie Kintz, now Top Gear Philippines' proud editor in chief.

13 First, and found only in Incumbent Motoring: Two weekend's at columnists. From January 30, 1995 to August 23, 2006, noted sports journalist Al Stockwell's column "Pull Tank" appeared side by side with Aida Mendoza's "On the Road." Al, who also has a Sports column "Spectator" and as one time held a post as Incumbent Sports editor is now a columnist of the Business Mirror and Top Gear Philippines Magazine.

14 IM's first full time reporter was Tessa Salazar. Joining the 2005 Asian Junior honors in 2005, Tessa also writes about health, preparing science and information technology as part of Tess de Pelma (columnist), and features (of three years ph).

15 He had a few issue of being a team media rally winners. During the 2001 media challenge hosted by Honda, Incumbent Motoring's Supersonic team came out on top. In numbers, Tessa Salazar, Raymond Tribilcio and Ulan Mendoza (coordinating), Jay de Pelma (columnist), and five features (of three years ph).

16 The first deal review of a car ("Second-decade" for Ford") last in 2001, when Raymond Tribilcio and Tessa Salazar teamed up.

17 The first journalism started for Incumbent Motoring was Pandemic in 2005 in Tessa Salazar, when the thirty Ford Awards for automotive journalism voted her story "Got rid of that blind spot for safe driving" was adjudged the best in the automotive auto-motor categories.

18 The first multi-part special report by IM appeared on March 21, 29 and April 5, 2001, when Tessa Salazar reported on second-hand converted trucks as "rolling coffins".

19 IM's Tessa Salazar rewarded the Best grand class in the Henry Ford Awards in 2005, when her stories were adjudged the best in the Auto Innovation, the Auto Industry and the Auto Power categories.

20 Aida Mendoza became the first woman of IBM's first editor.

(CONTINUED) B4-1

INQUIRER Motoring Jr weight (superfine) local motoring's heavyweights in the first Philippine Automotive Golf Cup.

AUG. 30, 2006 issue of the Inquirer/Motoring Section

Twenty five years of driving

CELEBRATING THE 25th anniversary of the Philippine Daily Inquirer is reason enough to look back on 25 years of driving. If you love cars and have been writing for this paper that many years.

When the PDI became a daily to subsheet in 1985, I was already driving every day to work in a Makati-based corporations and soon-thereafter articles on the side as a freelance writer. I had met PDI founder Eggie Apostol way back when she was the lifestyle editor of the Manila Chronicle, so I wrote feature articles for the publications she subsequently established, including Woman's Home Companion magazine, Mr & Ms magazine, Mr & Ms Special Edition and E-zadly.PDI.

During those years, traffic in Metro Manila was not as chaotic as it is today. There was no number coding, no a-zarra and much fewer motorcycles. I owned and drove at one time or another a Honda Civic Sedan, a Ford Laser, a 1.3-liter Honda Civic two-door hatchback, a 16-valve, 1.6-liter Toyota Corolla, a 1.3-liter Lancia, a Honda Accord 2.4 VTEC, a Toyota RAV4 and an Opel Astra sedan—although not necessarily in that sequence. All these cars had a manual transmission as I don't know how to drive a car-plus-any jeep and was comfortable driving a stick shift, whatever the number of forward speeds.

Floods

What I remember most about several of these cars was driving them through deep flood waters during the typhoon season. When I was living in Quezon City (as my daughters could easily go to Marykroll, Assisi and UP Diliman) and the Ilora Oriente was my car, there was a time when, on my way home from Makati, I had to find a deep flood of at least knee-high (or just an inch or so above the exhaust pipe) and drive through it. I was terrified that the water would seep into the cabin and the spunky little Gemini car of Bonnet, but it went through. The next day I brought the waterlogged car to the dealer for cleaning, a check up and the removal and drying of the carpet.

The first Corolla I had, a white 1.6 liter, 16-valve sedan, was a CBU (completely built unit) imported from Japan. It proved to be more waterproof than the Geminis when I drove it through a flood on Roxas Boulevard, from Jorge Bocobo St. up to Taft Avenue.

Like the Gemini, the Corolla seemed to float and didn't falter as the waters lapped at its fenders, but unlike the Gemini its cabin was airtight—no water leaked through. Yet days afterwards, I told friends and office mates about the amphibious aspect of my Corolla.

Heroic

The Toyota RAV4 was another heroic performer in the flood. When I bought it I was already living in Alabang. A week after I acquired the RAV4, a mega typhoon hit Metro Manila, flooding the lower areas like basin in Bonifacio. As luck would have it, I was driving home from Makati to Alabang at the afternoon of the first day of the great flood. The RAV4 was semi-deep in front of the Ilora Free Shop and nearly covered the fenders of the RAV4, but the three-door compact SUV drove through without water invading the interior. Like my white Corolla, the RAV4 was a CBU from Japan. It was originally destined for export to the Middle East as indicated by the fender letters on its side sticker.

But those floods were nothing compared to the misery and damage wrought by typhoon Ondoy (Pepeng). I was safe at home, my car high and dry in my garage, when Ondoy struck.

When I moved to Alabang and began the daily south- to north- to south commute, I learned from experience to always keep a distance of water and something to go by to know if the portions of the three still un-rehabilitated South Luzon Expressway were flooded and traffic was paralyzed. I wouldn't suffer from hunger and thirst. It was nerve-wracking to drive on the SLEX when the elevated Skyway was being built since horror stories about the shoddy construction materials and debris falling and damaging cars passing by underneath.

With the ongoing construction of the elevated Skyway extension from Buendia to Alabang, however, it's a different story. Although the construction work slows down traffic flow, safety measures are strictly followed by DPWH and Elite Metro Manila Tollways Corp.

STILL EXPORTING

Ford Group Philippines' Anita Salcedo insisted me to contact what I wrote last week about Ford. Per Anita, Ford is still supporting the Philippine Export and should to manufacturers and its exports is up 37 percent year-to-date versus 2005. Incidentally, the award of investments says the Five-year Automotive Export Program (AEP) lapsed in 2009 but since Ford registered in 2006, they can still export until 2011 when the AEP will be reviewed, possibly under a new formula in October.

TODAY'S RUBBER STICKER: If it moves so slowly, why is it called ROAD Race?

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla Mendoza

Blipping the Ferrari throttle

SKID MARKS

Butch Santos

AT 25, BOOKISH is very a few short years from Christmas, so by telling as I can remember, I always get 'HMO' the girls I should have worried because no parents, along with my friends and relatives always gave me a non-fiction present that is for both Christmas and my birthday (it's true).

I'm used to it and be nice, it is better to give than to receive (unless the latter is cash or jewelry).

But sometimes, a gift can come from the most unlikely of people. And the gift is so powerful, so awe-inducing that you only remember is as the wicked pink and cheap like a cotton candy.

This year, I got two very early gifts, one from Bermuda Shorts, and the other from a good friend of mine who builds cars.

A few weeks back, I was in a shoot for the Great Eighty-popular Driving Can Eight Car series. We were scheduling a young power people something for a high-end, high-performance and highly fashionable sandwich car and of course, an high-street cutted sedan by cadaplers with not a visit to the Jaguar Land Rover/Ferrari Showroom showrooms. While our guests, Sisters and Sirets Ignacio took the time to sample the cheap-ass Laguna XP II and CD 13 I had been eyeing intently at the Ferrari F599 GTB Fiorano parked in the rebranding area of the dealership. Now the F599 had replaced the highly regarded F430 and the updated F575 Maranello, Ferrari's front-engined V12 GT coupe. But the F599 boasted of a V12 engine very closely based on the ground-breaking Ferrari Enzo, so hearing the sound alone was worth a history in my books. Finally after enough harassing and harming inside of me, I pleaded with the representatives if I could get in and just try it out for size, so to speak. I love big, front-engined and powerful GTs because (a) my own Toyota Supra is of the same vein, b) these cars represent the gold-en era of high-speed motoring during the late 50s through the 60's and onto the early 70s and lastly, c) while every kid who loved cars in my time had a poster of either a Lamborghini Countach or a Ferrari Testarossa in their rooms beside Brooke Shields and Cindy Crawford, the moment I saw a Ferrari 250 GTO, with its smooth curves and long nose I was hooked!

Getting in proofs, touchie! not so rub-the brother seats too much and not to scuff the door sills, I was inside, and suddenly, the big, spacious Ferrari felt like a small 6-segment car. Despite the roomy interior, the whole car just screamed to wrap around me and I was developing instant vision just by being inside a stationary car. I thought that since I was inside, I might as well start her up. Pressing on the brakes, I fingered the START / STOP button and the big, beefy V12 roared into life, more like a sport bike than any car engine I can remember. The sound was a deboaning one, yet somehow pure, not some fabricated, made for the masses exhaust note but a noise brought about by the motor's soloists, untangled just enough to pass noise regulations.

This, I would imagine, is probably the closest one can ever get to being hands God Almighty himself as to speaks. His inner-soul power is so overwhelmingly strong, you almost fall back over. Waiting for a few minutes to warm the engine oil and let pressure stabilize, I clip the clutch in a couple of times each that everyone around looks either closer, or further away. This, I imagine is one proper car means to frighten little children and make men tremble in the knees while banging its driver close to the throne of ecstasy. Overwhelmed and tickled pink, shouting with glee each time I'd blip the throttle, I remembered why I fell in love with cars all over again. Thank you, Bermuda Sports, for probably the best Birthday and Christmas gift I've ever received in a long time.

HONDA
The Power of Dreams

blue skies
for our children

20 Years

Honda Heritage Raffle

Get a chance to celebrate with us in Motegi, Japan
and win other exciting Honda prizes!

Experience all these!

See the Honda Collection Hall

Feel Honda's latest technology

Plus, have a Tokyo Adventure!

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HONDA

Quick as silver: 25 fast, festive

Front page 81.1

Motoring Echoes congratulates Tom "On the Road"—in 2004 with his column titled "The Elephant behind the Driver."

21 In 2007, the 18th added a new category for motorsports feature, the first winner Tessa Salazar, for her feature on the country's first lady driver Michelle Yu.

22 BK published its first computer-related story in 2006. Written by Tessa Salazar, the three-part series featured budget cars and ownership costs. In 2008, another comprehensive review, a two-part test drive series on budget-priced compact cars, the balance the best auto test drive story in that year's BIBs.

23 Probably the first golf-related editor to write over to a motoring post, Jong Arcana, editor of the monthly magazine Inquirer Golf, took over as IM editor on Oct. 21, 2009.

24 The IM team scores a few during the 1st Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc (Campi) Motor Show Media Awards in August 2010. The team won a grand slam—for having the Best Motor Show Coverage among all media outlets, for having the best motoring page on the Motor Show, and for having the best Online Motor Show coverage. Inquirer Motoring reporter Charles E. Bolton also bagged the Best Motor Show Entertainment Story for his article "Campi's Green Guide to provide tips on efficient driving."

25 Inquirer Motoring successfully holds the first-ever media-organized golf tourney for the automotive industry, the First Philippine Automotive Golf Cup, on Nov. 16, 2010.

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THE ALL-NEW SONATA

INSPIRED BY NATURE, DRIVEN BY ENGINEERING

Is it possible to use natural designs from the environment to create engineering feats that are much more efficient than those in use today?

Many material engineers and research and development (R&D) experts agree that, since time immemorial, humans have always looked to nature for inspiration to solve the simplest to the most sophisticated problems that baffle them. Only now that they possess state-of-the-art instruments and a broader knowledge-base in engineering, that they are able to fully explore the possibilities of incorporating natural systems as models for their technologies.

BIOMIMETICS, derived from the Latin bio (life) and mimesis (to imitate), is the new branch of science that deals with the imitation of living systems, such as the designs and ideas of animals and plants, to create novel inventions that can give solutions to mankind's problems.

In the automotive world, Hyundai's research and engineering team has drawn inspiration from the orchid flower to build new flawless driving elements that promises to change the face of mainstream driving. The result the All-new Hyundai Sonata – the newest Next Generation mid-size sedan that has duplicated the aesthetic and contented soul values of the orchid. But looking deeper to its finer details, one would realize its design resemblance to yet another element of nature – water – ever flowing and dynamic – which makes it a flawless beauty that exceeds expectations and spans broad horizons in the future of mobility.

With the exterior outlines shown, the Hyundai Sonata exemplifies a sleek and sloping sedan design that gives it the capacity for greater speed. Its Fluidic Sculpture unbranded by an elegantly sloping roof and sweeping character lines, provide that 2 in 1 – car built not only for second-glances, but speed as well, as its overall shape dictates impressive aerodynamic features and agility.

Embellished on the seamless, clear-cut body of the Sonata are visibility-enhancing features such as the cat-eye shaped HID Headlights with Auto-leveling and Auto Light Control functions that operate at the maximum of their brilliance especially at night.

At the heart of the redesigned Sonata is a powerful 2.4-liter Theta II MPI engine—one of the most powerful petrol engines in its class, that can deliver up to a maximum power output of 175ps at 6,000rpm and a staggering torque of 23.3kg-m at 4,000rpm, reinforcing the intensity of this exquisite sedan beyond the confines of its mesmerizing physique.

In shifting gears, it employs a gate-type 6-speed H-Matic automatic transmission system, which offers an easy, unobstructed command over acceleration for that fluidic yet powerful expression on the road.

Adding to the remarkable performance of the Sonata's gasoline fuel powerhouse is its emission quality that is eco-environmental on a molecular level. With reduced fuel consumption, it becomes a most economical drive to help you keep gas and maintenance expenses to a minimum. It also boasts of minimized engine vibration, particularly when idling and accelerating, to keep your driving expeditions as slick and comfortable as possible.

Beneath the Sonata, two pairs of 17" (or 16" for the premium model) alloy wheels provide optimum's motoring capabilities, which provide adequate rolling resistance for that safe grip on the road.

Upgraded with an Amplitude Selective Damper, this mid-size sedan automatically regulates its shock absorption mechanisms beneath its chassis, thus increasing driving stability and comfort even on rough roads. Reliable stopping power is achieved with its front and rear disc brakes amplified by a brake booster, triggering instant yet safe braking.

A breathtaking aesthetic evolution

Immerse yourself in the Sonata's impressive design lines and you'll realize from every angle that it has got what it takes to stand head and shoulders with reputable contenders in its class. Perhaps one of its most distinctive features is a sleek six-piece 5-piece panoramic sunroof (Premium variant) equipped with unique voice-operated sunshades for the front and the rear, shielding your driving freedom to a whole new dimension. This luxurious feature allows you to bask under the sunrays or provide an al fresco ride perfect while traveling miles upon miles of open roads.

Inside, the interior comes very much equipped with an impressive new look. Slip in its leather seats (Premium variant) that provide a cozy and ergonomic experience. The X-design center fascia makes a fine impression with its forward-looking design that houses an enhanced vacuum fluorescent display which lights up in cool blue, especially helpful at night.

The all-new Sonata now employs a Push Button Ignition (Premium variant) that won't require you to turn in your key anymore. And while the Organ-type Accelerator Pedal gives you superior leg comfort during long drives,

the innovative
Paddle Shifters behind the
steering wheel make you feel like doing a race car driver who can now change your gearshifts at your fingertips.

Music aficionados will surely find the Sonata faithful to its musical derivation with its audio system with built-in radio, 6-CD Changer (Premium variant), MP3 player, and Aux inputs. Fitted with iPod and USB ports, the Sonata gives you the freedom to connect your music gadgets and listen to your favorite tracks with its six (6) speakers, subwoofer, and external amplifier (Premium variant).

Comprehensive security features are also integrated into this next-generation Hyundai sedan such as advanced airbag technology, seatbelts with pretensioner (for both driver and passenger seats), and impact-sensing auto door unlock and speed-sensing auto door lock.

The Sonata also utilizes the Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) standard to keep the wheels from locking instantaneously thereby preventing skids. Coupled with an Electronic Stability Control or ESC, traction is greatly enhanced, correcting understeer or oversteer condition during cornering and stabilizes the car to help the driver regain control. The Sonata is also equipped with the Hill-Start Assist Control (HAC) and Brake Assist System (BAS) that prevents the vehicle from slipping for up to two seconds when stopped on an incline and reduces braking distance by increasing brake oil pressure during sudden braking, respectively.

Nature has been in existence for millions of years before the first man have roamed the planet. Although man sits in the highest rung of this evolutionary scale, way beyond the rest of the DNA pool, we humans cannot deny the fact that we take inspiration from nature to create new elements of change. We taken a large portion of our future engineering, such as our automobiles, to the structures of nature. Just like the All-New Hyundai Sonata. Innovative. Ingenious. Resourceful. Sustainable.

Stretch the boundaries of possibilities and discover a new beauty – a new driving element – with the All-New Hyundai Sonata.

Fluidic sculpture. An cutting-edge, Groundbreaking engineering. A smooth-operating drive. Discover the new shape of road-ruling with the all-new Hyundai Sonata, inspired by nature to take driving experience into a whole new level.

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Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan

LIFESTYLE Home & Entertaining

Scion brings personal style into property development

Robbie Antonio is a fashion horse whose latest project is with—of course!—Versace

By Margo C. Enriquez
Lifestyle Writer

REAL ESTATE scion Roberto "Robbie" Antonio infuses his business with style and art. The 33-year-old managing director of Century Properties dresses up in his signature look—tapered designer suits, matched with silk ties and pocket squares.

"If I wear a tie, I always wear a pocket square. If so so shoes, so simple, and goes perfectly with any tie and a white shirt. If I don't wear a tie, I will wear a pocket square in a different color," he says.

For the business interview, he dons an Italian suit with a patterned silk lining over a bespoke white shirt accentuated with five buttons. He wears Italian shoes laced up on the side. He rarely has to unravel with ease. Occasionally he glances at his designer watch, as he is running late for a meeting.

His office at Century Towers is furnished with elements customized in New York, inspired by iconic designers. The look is monochrome—white-to-colored walls, a wenge desk, a modernesque table made of steel painted in black and topped with crocodile skin. Shoes are lined up underneath the metal and crocodile bench.

Hovering over the velvet custom-made sofa and grey ottoman is a framed million-dollar, multi-sized" which breaks the uniformity of grays. He says he tastefully chose the materials and the designs. "It's the materials, not the prices who make them."

Paintings in cardboard are stacked in one corner. The shelves are filled with books on art and design and catalogues from Christie's and Sotheby's. Antonio subscribes to 21 magazines a month, all on his passion for interiors and art.

He cultivated this interest in New York, attending gallery openings and having a neighbor who owned over 700 Andy Warhol artworks. He is modest about his art collection, consisting of European and American artists from the postwar to the contemporary, and refuses to name drop the artists.

The walls are lined with photos of the young Antonio with New York society whose names he supposed to keep confidential.

There is a striking photograph of him and architecture icon I.M. Pei, the man who designed the glass pyramid at the Louvre in Paris, Manhattan's Four Seasons Hotel, and Century Properties' luxury residential project, Eastvisa East Orchid at Bonifacio Global City and.

In the photo, Antonio is wearing a diamond Dior Homme suit over a bold, striped shirt and a contrasting wing-tip oxford collar.

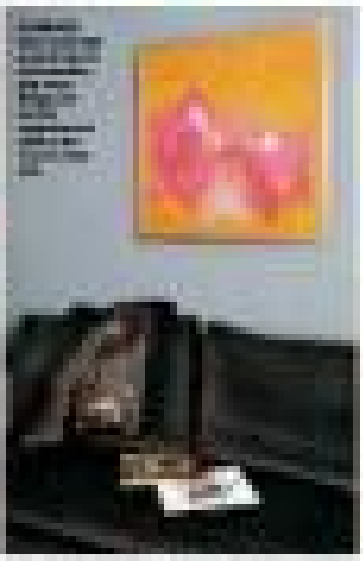
"He's very conservative. I can't wear flashy colors around him," Antonio says of I.M. Pei with a chuckle.

Real estate A-lister

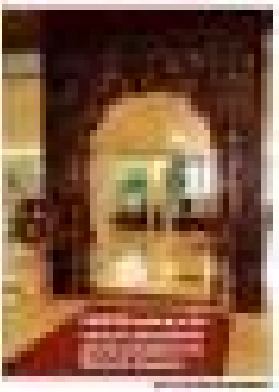
Antonio has lived in the States for half of his life. At 17, he went to study at Northwestern University, majoring in economics and graduating with outstanding grades. After earning his masters' degree in business at Stanford Graduate School, he moved to New York.

It was inevitable that he would end up in

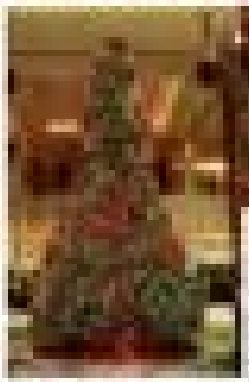
CONTD

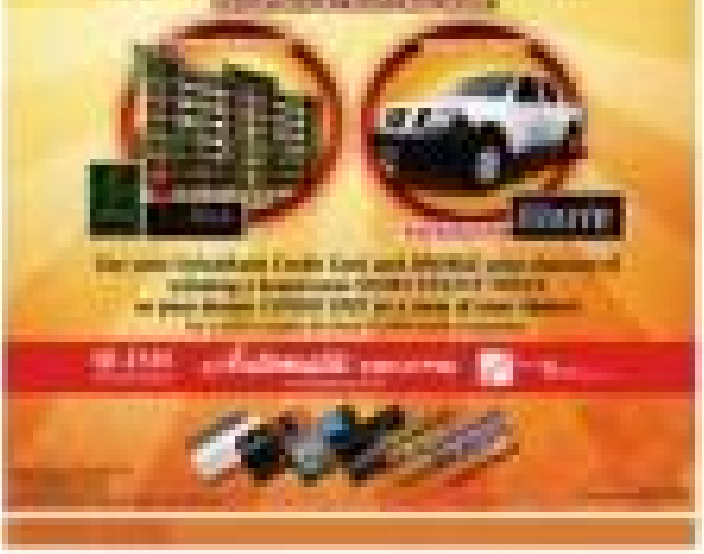


Scion brings personal style into property development



Master decorator with a social conscience





THE CEREMONIAL turnover of coin banks and donations for The Gift of Change (Cars Project) is held during the Robinsons Malls Annual Lighting at the Midtown Wing of Robinsons Place Manila. From left: Inez Luis Manzano, Fr. Mark C. Manalo, administrator of the Jaime Cardinal Sin Learning Center; and Arlene G. Magtibay, Robinsons Malls general manager

A 20-FT indoor tree is formally lit at the Midtown Wing of Robinsons Place Manila to officially welcome the Christmas season at Robinsons malls. Present are Manasan; Magtibay; Moreno, Tommy D. Abino, deputy cultural specialist of the US Embassy; Joseph Tortella with scholars of Jaime Cardinal Sin Village, beneficiaries of Robinsons Malls' The Gift of Change project.

ROBINSONS Malls' VP for Leasee Lilay T. Abano and Magtibay; Moreno, Manalo and Robinsons Malls VP for Property Management Tommy L. D

Christmas tree lighting at Robinsons Place

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TWO OFFICIALS welcome the holiday season, Robinsons Malls recently lit up a 20-ft indoor Christmas tree at the Midtown Wing of Robinsons Place Manila.

Special guests included Manila Vice Mayor Isko Moreno; Joseph Tortella, Deputy Cultural Affairs officer of the US Embassy; and celebrities Luis Manzano and Iya Villania.

At the event, Robinsons Malls' beneficiary Jaime Cardinal Sin Village, represented by its administrator Fr. Mark C. Manalo, received donations from Robinsons Malls' The Gift of Change (Cars Project) and The Children's Library.

The green-clad tree, dubbed with red magnolias, red balls in several sizes, golden baubles, large pine cones and red velvet ribbons interlaced with over 20,000 fresh and citrine lights, stands out as main attraction in the mall's lifestyles wing. A gold star adorns the treetop while seven-color lights (blue, red, yellow, pink, violet, green and orange) complement the look.

Robinsons Land Corp. contracted the services of Pinoy Prestige Rentals to create and complete the project. Over 15 workers, from welders to electricians and skilled artisans, completed the project.

MANILA Vice Mayor Isko Moreno

HUMEBLIST and Robinsons Greenhills Village, PLC corporate public relations manager

LIFESTYLE

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The fine hours of HARRY WINSTON now at Adora

TWO HARRY WINSTON watch collections will be launched at Adora—a first in Philippine retail.

Private viewing starts today on the ground floor of Adora Executive 5. Store formally open Dec 13.

Harry Winston watches are as unique as they are instantly recognizable. Sharing the spirit of creativity that defines the brand's iconic jewels, each remarkable design is distinctly known in the world of fine luxury watchmaking.

Off-centered dials, bold skeletons, and the ultimate in refinement are their signatures, as are the arches adorning the cases, inspired by the iconic architecture of Winston's Fifth Avenue salon. In a nod to the House's celebrated history, many of the timepieces are lit up with diamonds.

The company's founder, Mr. Winston, insisted his "only the exceptional." Fueled by this idea, the Harry Winston Timemaster collections form a rich array of unique watches, each with distinct and powerful identity, rooted in collaborative culture of exceptional complications and innovation.

Premier Collection

Dedicated to horological complications, the Premier collection continues to unveil world-first technical wonders that have propelled Harry Winston to the forefront of fine watchmaking.

The Premier collection revolutionized mechanical watchmaking with the introduction of its first double-dial, the Myrtograph Perpetual Calendar.

In tribute to this revolutionary mechanism, the re-edition Premier Excenter Perpetual Calendar was in-

PREMIER Excenter Myrtograph

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BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

KIKO MACHINE — BY MAKA ABERA

SEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

ANG DRAYBER — BY EDGILO & EDJANICE

SHERMAN'S LAGOON — BY JIM TOOMEY

TULDOK — BY MARA COLI

Lagingmakering ng drama sa 8:00 AM *10:00 AM *1:00 PM Loose hanggang Bore rao

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

TOO SOON TODAY You like people. This is why you quickly become to-know-you-better. You're a natural at this. You have the metaphysical and high energy to explore whatever interests you. Once you embrace something, you embrace it wholeheartedly. In romance you want variety, absorbing relationships. It's rare when you are. Your year ahead will be mystical and beautiful in all respects but **Scorpio**.

Virgo (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) Romance is passionate, mercurial and very mixed today. "None of you is the father love to get involved with someone, and so in a very serious relationship? Otherwise you will never forget."

Libra (Sept. 23 to Oct. 23) Romance is passionate, mercurial and very mixed today. "None of you is the father love to get involved with someone, and so in a very serious relationship? Otherwise you will never forget."

Scorpio (Oct. 24 to Nov. 22) Romance is passionate, mercurial and very mixed today. "None of you is the father love to get involved with someone, and so in a very serious relationship? Otherwise you will never forget."

Sagittarius (Nov. 23 to Dec. 21) Romance is passionate, mercurial and very mixed today. "None of you is the father love to get involved with someone, and so in a very serious relationship? Otherwise you will never forget."

Capricorn (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Romance is passionate, mercurial and very mixed today. "None of you is the father love to get involved with someone, and so in a very serious relationship? Otherwise you will never forget."

Aquarius (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Romance is passionate, mercurial and very mixed today. "None of you is the father love to get involved with someone, and so in a very serious relationship? Otherwise you will never forget."

Pisces (Feb. 20 to March 20) Romance is passionate, mercurial and very mixed today. "None of you is the father love to get involved with someone, and so in a very serious relationship? Otherwise you will never forget."

Aries (March 21 to April 19) Romance is passionate, mercurial and very mixed today. "None of you is the father love to get involved with someone, and so in a very serious relationship? Otherwise you will never forget."

Taurus (April 20 to May 20) Romance is passionate, mercurial and very mixed today. "None of you is the father love to get involved with someone, and so in a very serious relationship? Otherwise you will never forget."

Gemini (May 21 to June 20) Romance is passionate, mercurial and very mixed today. "None of you is the father love to get involved with someone, and so in a very serious relationship? Otherwise you will never forget."

Cancer (June 21 to July 22) Romance is passionate, mercurial and very mixed today. "None of you is the father love to get involved with someone, and so in a very serious relationship? Otherwise you will never forget."

Leo (July 23 to Aug. 22) Romance is passionate, mercurial and very mixed today. "None of you is the father love to get involved with someone, and so in a very serious relationship? Otherwise you will never forget."

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CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more puzzles and programs go to www.sudoku.com

Concepts Sudoku — By Steve Ginsig

	5	2				1	9	
4			6		1			7
			9					5
			2					9
			5					3
		6					4	
	3					6		
7					2			
6	9	5	7		8	3	2	1

Difficulty Level ★★★

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

DOXA
Automatic
Chronograph

From page B1

replaced in 2010, following in the footsteps of the series' other exceptional models, such as the Premier Excenter Timezone and Premier Heritage.

Doxa

Crafted from the noblest materials, the Doxa collection provides the ideal setting to showcase fine watchmaking complications. Whether a chronograph, dual time-zone, moon phase, or tourbillon, it offers an impressive range of sophisticated mechanisms. The contemporary dial features self-cemented luminous, while the winding crown on the side of the case is protected by the brand's trademark arches. True to Swiss style, each watch captures a modern balance of sporty elegance.

DOXA
Dual Time

PREMIER
Perpetual
Calendar DH 8

A2 QUARTZ
with New
York Dial

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Pocoyo Meet and Greet
LOST ISLAND
The Dinosaurs Invade Filinvest City!
PETER PAN
Watch Ballet Philippines' rendition of Peter Pan as he flies into everyone's happy thoughts this Holiday season.
BONGGA ng Bargains

Comme des Garcon Perfumes invade Adora

COMME DES Garcons perfumes go against the traditional rules of perfumery. Even its packaging is unique, the first one ever whose bottle lies horizontally. It is a very individualistic scent that leans toward the masculine. Each variant is not named but numbered, and marries synthetic manmade smells with natural and organic ones. Over the years, Comme des Garcons fragrances have introduced cutting-edge scents that continue to speak of individuality and breaking traditional rules of society. Its fragrances attempt to bottle every man's everyday existence and capture the memories and emotions they engender. They hold up the beauty in what we consider to be mundane, and translate it into something special and sublime. Comme des Garcon Perfume is available only at Adora Department Store, 2/F, Greenbelt 5.

THE FIRST perfume in a new series of Comme des Garcons perfumes based on the world of Comme des Garcons.

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71

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How to be an 'organic parent'

It's about going back to basics and doing what's natural–one can be away and yet not be distant, as my wife has shown

By Dennis P. Sto. Domingo
Contributor

A DVERTISING HAS me spared parenting. Feeding this brand or milk, using this soap or medicine, giving this and that gadget are promoted as instrumentals of good parenting—and the consciousness bombardments of these messages has made people believe that they are true.

But reflecting on what I have observed and experienced, I realize that aligning strategies with business tactics may help us become more effective parents. We can go back to basics and become "organic" parents.

Write us your story @lifestyle.inquirer.com.ph

Concern over the ill effects of chemical-laden food has led to a growing preference for organically grown food. It is not surprising, however, that rather than [illegible] ...consuming food that [illegible] such as, food grown without [illegible] fertilizers and pesticides.

Here are examples of natural realities that we, parents, can capitalize on.

Play is a child's natural activity. Children simply love to play. Thus, parents must look at this as a rich opportunity to develop and know their children.

The habits and behavior our children develop may be allowed by the toys we provide them. It will be good for a child to have diverse toys or he or she develops his or her various facets.

There are toys that develop a child's cognitive abilities (puzzles, board games) or physical coordination (hula-hoops, jump ropes, speed marbles); toys that fire the imagination and creativity (play dough, building blocks, action figures).

But there are also toys that develop aggression and violence when used without adult supervision (knives, guns).

Knee-jerk reaction

In this age of high technology, addictive gaming gadgets may be high on a child's wish list. With the Christmas gift-giving season upon us, choosing what toys to give must be a deliberate move aimed at a desired result (eye-hand coordination), and not just a knee-jerk reaction to advertisements or keeping up with the Joneses.

But more important than the toys we provide is the time we spend playing with our child. Observing a child at play can make a parent understand and appreciate a son or daughter better.

Moreover, playing with our children fills their treasure chest of fond memories, which shall serve as their store, giving them stability as they become adults. So go ahead and play tag with them or lie on the grass and watch the cloud formations.

Going to school is not optional, meaning to know more is. Children are naturally curious; they seek answers, and want to learn more. That's how some learn that easy is not food and sharp objects can cause pain.

School offers an environment that suits the child's natural desire to know more. Yet, there are parents who focus on test scores and grades or expect cards instead of what their children have learned in school.

It may be natural for parents to want their children to get good grades. But putting emphasis on grades drives the focus from the real reason for going to school.

I have met parents who pushed their children to study so hard, children "missed the bus" in learning. Some parents will claim that they are just developing their children's study habits.

ACS with Thierry Tan, Baba Romualdez and Neal Chuto

BETH Paringit, Monique Villoroz and Mathias Yong

ABLING Mutiach, Pres. Meynay Aquino and Maurice Soong

CDJ&MGCC Brothers: Chay, Mikey and Tony Cojuangco

Tonyboy the birthday boy

Gretchen B plays real-life hostess with the mostest

DJ Ejay, Mayor Ramon Edward, Chay Cojuangco, Pres. Meynay Aquino and Tony Cojuangco

MAJORS Barrozo, Jay Ortega, Pres. Meynay Aquino and Mimi Tuason

MARY Murcia, Ann, Vicky Wynder, Nicole Lobregat and her husband, Mannie Ortega

DOLLY Gulang, Jade Lo and Susan Tan

PATRICK Rosa, Maureen Soong, Leo Espinosa and Irma Soria

BETH Paringit, Monique Villoroz and Mathias Yong

Gretchen B (Gretchen Barretto) is a real-life hostess with the mostest. It was a coincidence that serendipitously turned out to be a totally memorable one, dahlings, as one of our town's namedropjunkies...from the luncheon of the political prerogati to mega business tycoons and fashionable society faces...flocked the excellent restaurant, Ede Dudi. They were there for undiluted luscious elegance, philanthropist, and "just for fun" singer Tonyboy Cojuangco, who was scheduled to be on a plane headed back to Manila from the US. As luck would have it though, the trip was delayed a week.

Although Tony had initially decided to celebrate his big day next year, the top business of the night and fantastic actress of the hand-to-heart "Magkaribal" soap, Gretchen Barretto and Harry Liu, a mega stockbroker pal, advised him that the Chinese zodiac says 10th and 19th years major milestones that must be celebrated. And his entourage did happen, and what a blast it was, dahlings.

Instead of a less posh hotel, Tony chose to greet the groups he had supported through the years, such as, take note, pedrogyo, Manila Symphony, MAJO, Center Friends (Tony's classical guitarist pals who proudly performed in front of the Philippines), Amiso Pelesi's opera group, and the Electromaniacs (Tony's own rock band). Needless to say, we were all mesmerized by the production numbers. Each group, upon Tony's request, lunch, did their own versions of "Bohemian Rhapsody."

Reading the guest list was President Noynoy Aquino, no less, with his brilliant Executive Secretary Jojo Ochoa; Undersecretary Rico Puno; Cabinet's multitalented Mayor Ramon Edwards; Gov. Danny Lim; lawyer Ludwig Lauzon; lawyer Ojang Villanueva; lawyer Micky Herrera; Tony's brothers Chay and Mikey Cojuangco; businessmen Al Tenggo, Noel Oñate, and Blair Luquiaman; Lo Peralada's Robert Quiche; Irma and Patrick Puno; Mayor Boni and Ana Rivilla; BFF: Gigi Montecalvo and Bobby Guevara of MCS.

Also there were Rick Puno, with People Asia's publisher and political writer Babe Romualdez and Thierry Tan, VP of UBP; Cupcake Micky and Marlene Yong; Jun and Shelli Portugal; Monique Villoroz; Mimi Bondoveres; Willy and Maureen Soong of Jaguar Phils.; brothers Micky, Joel, Rupa and Jim Lupa; Irma Soria, who made Gretchen's stunning outfit that night, and Patrick Sucaet (Gretchen's favorite makeup artist. Wow, how's that for name-dropping, dahlings!

The food by Lolo Dudi's executive chef Ariel Manuel was absolutely divine: with the roasted calf and duck cocktails as a 'faux' dinner were gilled in Tony's Chef Ariel demi-all-night specials, from tagalog sizzlers, to Gorgeous ears Lumpia, and Caldo ala Muchhita, while the desserts were all godfabulous!

Getting as-to-own-greater heights was the to-die-for Don Julio 1942 Tequila and Macallan's single malt 18 years old, courtesy of Gretchen B. No wonder the bash went on past Cinderella's bedtime.

PATRICIA Lopez, Mayor Ramon Edward, Chay Cojuangco, Pres. Meynay Aquino and Tony Cojuangco

MICHELLIN SYIAP, chef de Mandarin Oriental Dhoie Rodriguez

Gourmet lovers take to the stars

It's a gourmand's dream come true (Tee) when Mandarin Oriental's fine dining restaurant, Tin Yueh, invited guests to sample the renowned contemporary French cuisine of Michelin-star chef Olivier Rodriguez, who received his historic merit first earned a Michelin star for Mandarin Oriental Tokyo for three consecutive years, no less.

Super chartisan Mark Swallow, popular general manager of the hotel, had an all-out-to-impress-big him for this gastronomic romp. The Tin'Yueh was packed with namedrop-junkies craving a bite of Chef Olivier's so-to-die-for dishes, prepared together with two assistant chefs from Mandarin Oriental Taipei, and the host hotel's executive chef Rene Ortlib and his team.

GM Mark Swallow, with Ambassador Bea Gabor and Madam Ursula Schreiber of the Embassy of Switzerland and Iris Jojolat Estate Ambassador Isaya Fornari and his wife, vivacious Rhona E. welcomed guests to celebrate seven-course degustation menu, along with Nantuck's usual suspects Shelly Tantoco and businessman Patrick Jacinto, working horses Marivic Vazquez, gracious and gorgeous couple Ed and Margarita Delgado with Tessa Valdez, met with my "Oh No It's Johnny" pardner Johnny Litton, Glenn Sabi, and Tessa & Country and Philippine Tatler's mega-aunty Cynthia Fernandez and Rita Bonifacio, respectively.

While lingering around with chilled bubbly in my hand, I chatted with other fun gourmands and connoisseurs who were already enjoying their dinner: Bill Hellon, jewelry princess Linda Okubo with realtor Rodelio Albor, mega businessman Manolo Ilabaca and his wife, charity-armored Claudine Rodriguez, and super gal pals Cheryl Ho and Ingrid Chua-Un, who were delighted with the chef's to-die-for dark chocolate and tart Grey tea concoction, and immediately ran-ed their pleasure!

'Tis the season for Alterations

Now that the season of partying is here, it's time to alter or tighten your outfits, dahlings. And believe me there is one place that will fix miracles for your clothes. It's one of the best (and the best-looking) repair shop one can find. Alterations Plus is efficient and excellent. Definitely a very professional organization, and I have been very satisfied with their work. Check them out, pulangaw!

Check out their website www.alterationsplus.com for their Christmas promo.

OUR blog for the day— business originals and philanthropist Tonyboy Cojuangco with his all-time love and top lovers of the affair, Gretchen Barretto

ABOVE, Marie Lobregat and Jason Snoop. (left) Gretchen Barretto and Johnny Velasquez

MAUS Sabalvaro, Pres. Meynay Aquino and Nina Sabalvaro

ERIC Soc of the President Jojo Ochoa

LINDA Ebdon, communications director of Mandarin Oriental Clarissa Chollian and Glenn Sabi

PATRICK Jacinto, Mady Tantoco, Mutian Silvius Fornari, Tessa Prieto Valdez and Arab Lara Fornari

ED DELGADO with mari and Marivic Vazquez

TWEETIE Fernandez, Chito Angeles and Margarita Delgado

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH
Manners Awards
Photos by Alex Van Haeyen
powered by MAC

Balancing time between my two babies

Audrey Tan-Eslabi
Contributor

AUDREY Tan-Eslabi and kids

Growing up an only child makes it more difficult for me to understand what it's like to share your parents' time with siblings

I CAN STILL remember what it felt like when I came home with my second baby. I wondered how I would balance taking care of my newborn son and my 10-month-old daughter.

Perhaps it was the lack of sleep, but I developed this delusional idea that I could handle everything, just like I did before the new baby came. So I tried to be in two (other times, three) places at the same time, all the time.

Soon enough, my body gave up on me and I was worse off than before, stuck in bed, useless. To make things even worse, I felt awful. I felt like I was constantly shortchanging between one child and the other, never able to fully give either one the complete attention.

I felt so guilty that Adriana suddenly had to make do with only half of my attention, unlike before. I also felt the same guilt about Joanne, who was receiving only half the attention I gave her sister when she was his age.

I then continued to devise plans to spend equal time between the two kids. Once I spent almost a whole month dragging poor baby Joanne with me and Adriana, only to find out on that month's checkup that his growth was not proportionate to his weight gain due to lack of sleep.

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Apparently those necessitated naps were not good enough for a growing baby. They need full times, so Joan now sees days of solid sleep for the growth hormone to kick in. I could have kicked myself when I heard this.

A clever plan

And so a new plan was devised. I would spend the whole morning with Adriana only, with exceptions only for feeding Joanne. Then, after lunch, when she would take her nap and then go to the park, it would be the baby's time exclusively. Late afternoons and early evenings would be full family time, as we could all bond together.

I felt so clever—or at least I did the first two days. I soon realized that with babies and toddlers, the only plan is that there is no plan.

Today, I still try to come up with timetables and activities to divide my time equally between the two kids. But I've learned to be a lot more flexible, spending time with whoever needs me more at that point.

When Adriana was a baby, I used to let her sleep for hours on my chest (I loved those times!), but now I know I can't do that with Joanne; when I have a toddler who is wide awake and asking me to run after her. But when I run, believe me, I take advantage and savor those precious (in)moments when I can have my son sleep peacefully in my arms, because I know now how quickly those days will pass.

The result is that there are times I get in bed with a smile on my face, knowing that I was really able to spread quality time with both kids.

But there are also those days, and sometimes they stretch into a week or so, when I know I'm just spending enough time with one or the other, and I promise myself that I'll fix it the next day.

That's when I fall back into my guilt pit, but I know that it's not as big a deal as I think it is. After all, my kids are not the first kids out there who have had to share their mother's attention.

But I guess growing up an only child makes it a bit more difficult for me to understand what it's like to have a sibling to share your parents' time with.

No scoreboard

For example, I've come to learn that balancing time between two kids gets easier with practice. I've also learned to be easier on myself. After all, the kids don't have a score board that shows who gets more of my time.

I've come to see how even the most mundane routines are holy build bonds. Joanne's bathtimes are set, and we both look forward to them (at least I do) as we relax the massage part after the bath, which turns into a mini-concert with me singing and rocking him to sleep.

As for Adriana, I usually take her to the 6 p.m. Mass in our parish church. She loves lining up with all the people for communion, and she reportedly loves lighting candles at the Mass.

Another routine she has come to look forward to is doing the groceries with me. She knows where the fruits are and chooses what she'd like for that week. She gets a kick out of searching the fish and the shrimps in the aquariums, and I know her favorite portion is the dairy section, where she will open at least one pack of yogurt or cheese to snack on while we finish our list.

Outside the regular domestic routines, I've also discovered Aquakyds's Mommy Ice Duckly and Me swimming classes at Colegio de San Agustin. The pool is heated and indoor, so it's always just right. I take both kids on different days, and I really enjoy the one-on-one time I get with them.

Another discovery I made was just last Friday, when my son's godmother invited me to join her and her husband at the Ayala Triangle Gardens (it's the one bordered by Ayala Avenue, Makati Avenue and Paseo de Roxas) to watch the Ottoman lights show (every day, 6-8 p.m.). Adriana loved it, so much so that we went back again on Sunday, but this time with Joanne in tow.

Looking back now, I actually can't believe how quickly my tiny newborn has turned into a curious-and interactive baby, while my little toddler is well on her way to becoming a not-so-little preschooler. Sometimes I worry that I may be missing out on moments with one child while I'm off with the other.

I know, however, that with (two of them) maybe more in the future), there will be times as many beautiful times to look forward to, and best of all, two times more joy and love to share.

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How to be an 'organic parent'

It's going overboard when such training deprives children of sleep and play. Studying them becomes a response to fear—a fear that loses its power as children get older.

When my youngest son, who's in Grade 3, comes home and shares something he learned in school which I didn't know (or have forgotten), I say, "Hindi ko alam yan, ha."

Then I encourage him to listen to his teacher so he can teach me more things.

Two things happen. First, he feels a sense of superiority because he knows something I didn't, thereby building his self-confidence.

Second, he is encouraged to be attentive in class because he wants to be able to share more of his knowledge when he comes home.

Once children enter school, let us encourage them to have fun and learn as much as they can. Parents will not have a problem with how grades come. Basic children are educated the place to learn more and have fun doing so, because they are with friends.

A kiss on the finger

Contact comfort is a child's natural source of security. Remember how a child was relieved by a kiss on a painful finger or assuaged by a hug during a disillusionment? It is a very effective tool for raising children, motivating a child to continue doing what pleases us.

Yet sometimes parents cheer, perhaps unknowingly, a child's source of security from contact comfort to objects: "I cannot attend your school programs, but I'll give you a prize for your achievement." These parents later complain that their children are too materialistic, because they won't do anything without getting something in return.

When my wife was working in the US, she bought home gadgets for our children. iPods, digital cameras, notebook computers (for those items were not "in existence" for her absence.

In fact, she maximized her presence through the Internet. She regularly communicated with our children via webcam. She helped them with homework and exchanged stories with them, even when they were miles apart.

It was a sacrifice on her part because she had to stay awake during her designing time. But in fact, as hour spent with the kids was worth much more than an hour of sleep!

Personal presence is something children really value. We too cannot fault parents who work away from home for failing to be present. But one can be smart and yet not be distant, as my wife has shown.

When our children do well in school or simply help in household, my wife and I reward them with right things and lots of kisses. Well, sometimes we eat out, too.

Assuring our children of our constant presence..."We will be there for you"—is the most valuable reward we have given them. They know that what they do makes us happy.

Raising children is never an easy task. Yet, parenting has become more complicated because of external influences that take us away from what's natural. So, let's go back to basics and be "organic" parents. Organic parenting is more effective and, unlike organic produce, it won't cost us more.

The author wrotes learning modules for parenting workshop seminars. In accordance with his wife, Grace, in their children's schools. Organic Parenting is the backbone of their third workshop seminar. The first two are Reading the Fine Print and 7 Verbs, Nouns and Love. He is Dasmariñas City and hosts his children. E-mail them at dmrsingles@yahoo.com.ph or dasmarinasyouth@yahoo.com

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Marikina Celebrates 14th Cityhood Anniversary

The shoe capital's big steps to progress

By Nikko Calleja
Photos by Rusty Hentiliada

During ups and downs in the entire fourteen years of Marikina's cityhood, the city bears the trademark of resilience as it repeatedly goes back to its feet and yet incessantly moves forward.

"It was the only direction for the city of Marikina, to always move forward," Mayor Del De Guzman said adding that the city government is also bent on both internal and up the potential it already has.

A newly-elected mayor of Marikina City for a consecutive and reappointed for more than two decades, De Guzman said his governance centers on improving the residents' welfare and serving them with compassion.

It should go beyond pampering them new infrastructures and facilities, he said.

Some nominees and his colleagues believe his further accomplishes what is already in place – the vision and action of former Mayor Bayani Fernando and his wife Marides with the heart of Dr Guzman.

MAYOR Del De Guzman

A favorite catchphrase at the city hall says: "If built a house and MCP turned it into a home while Mayor Del will make it residents feel at home."

Idiom springs from that principle and brought about various other plans for baby care and mounting full projects, the efforts to revitalize the dying Marikina shoe industry is receiving business returns, and reviving the city's parks and bikeways.

Harvest season

In an interview at his office, Dr. Guzman was fearless to admit some disappointments in the past 14 years.

MARIKINA City Hall Park

MARIKINA River Park

Asked if the city residents are rich, the mayor shook his head and said the unemployed client and the unimaginable flood unleashed by the Tropical Storm "Ondoy" made life harder for the city residents. Many have become unemployed, he said.

"That cityhood started in 1996, the time when the city was recovering from the natural's economic turmoil. Investors began to locate here at the time," De Guzman said.

He said after 10 years, more and more businesses relocated to the province because of their lower minimum wage rate and lower taxes.

"Businesses are coming in and out through the years. But we were stopped campaigning to attract investors to the business here," the mayor said.

The city government has put up an incentives for the business patch before Ondoy struck with four including San Miguel Pure-Foods Company and Bonvar Industrial.

"Then, it's down to two," De Guzman said.

De Guzman said investors must know that Marikina City is "the place to be," having traffic less levels, peaceful and orderly community, and a "more mature and skilled labor force."

Shoe commission

Dr. Guzman, son of longtime shoemakers, hinged to host one day the simultaneous issue of hammers and nails along the streets of Marikina City.

That was why the city government convened a shoe trade commission – comprising 20 known shoe manufacturers such as Bistoy Lopez, Divia, and Edit —.

The commission hopes to solve the present woes of the Marikina shoe trading.

How to compete against the influx of cheap imports and the local campaigning of Marikina shoe producers were the first two issues that the commission talked about in its two previous meetings.

As a result of the meeting, a shoe trade fair at the Marikina Sports Complex was put up Thursday to Sunday (Dec. 2 to 5) from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. everyday.

It remains a temporary place for marketing the shoes locally since the conversion of a three-story Marikina Trade Hall is in the offing, De Guzman said.

The shoe commission was no longer new to the east of old interline. On March 5, 1967, Mark-

PAGE 2

Bikeways, bikelanes for a model city

ORDINANCE 8, 1998, Marikina was proclaimed a city through Republic Act 8223. Under the reign of Bayani Fernando, who former Metropolitan Manila Development Authority chair, Marikina earned the praise "dynamic and greatest city" in the country.

Since to cityhood, it has been boasting a stable economy which heavily relies on the industry of shoe and leather products. It also claims the Marikenos are hardworking, tenacious, and disciplined as shown in the laborious process of shoe production.

Over the years, the local government has been reaping awards for its best environmental practices. Two of the most recent are the World Health Organization's Best Practice Award for Climate Change and Health for being a Bicycle-Friendly City, and the Getting Fresh Award for its Eco-Sweets Program.

More recently, Mayor Bel De Guzman revealed his plan to revive the bikelanes and bikeways effort which were neglected in the last two years.

"We will set up street lights along the bikelanes, clean up the area and continue its maintenance through the bikeways office," Dr Guzman said.

One of the objectives of the bikeways is to encourage the Marikenos to engage in the biking as both sport and mode of transportation. The project was primarily aimed at promoting health wellness and carbon footprint reduction.

Mabuhay to all Marikeños on our 14th Cityhood Anniversary!

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The shoe capital's big steps to progress

From page F1

ina shoemakers per sqm trade fair in front of the town hall. The town government later created the Marikina Shoe Trade Commission to commute and operate the fair.

After 14 years since Marcos led the inauguration of the project, shoemakers decided to shut down the fair and move into Cubao, Cubmasan, Pasay City and Makati.

Some suggestions on improving the shoe production are still being modelly-studied, De Guzman said.

For his part, Rep. Miro Quimbo suggests the specialized labor in the shoemaking process and the use of machines to triple the production.

"But we shouldn't stop doing handmade products. We have a niche market for that," he said.

Quimbo said there's nothing wrong to changing manual labor to mechanized labor so long as it contributes to the business' growth.

New demand for housing

Paul Sison, head of the city's public information office, said the demand for housing has started creeping back , a year after "Ondoy" flooding flattened many houses in Marikina City last year.

It was a sign of the private sector's confidence in the local government, he said.

Ira Presidente Villegas, developer SV. Salonga Realty Corp. pushed through with its plan to develop a 1.2-hectare land, Marikina City, into a residential compound and a low-rise condominium.

Now named Windsor Place, the developer redesigned the units of and the entire condominium in anticipation of another flooding.

In an interview, Arnold Enriquez, project engineer at the Windsor Place, said the first floor is the garage and the garden.

The second floor has the living room and the kitchen while the bathrooms and the veranda are on the third floor, Enriquez said.

"All bedrooms will also be utilized," Enriquez said.

Meanwhile, the hilltop-style condominium, which has four stories and two-level car parks, will have exit and entrance ramps.

One of the selling points of Windsor Place is its nearness to the top schools in Metro Manila such as Ateneo de Manila University, Miriam College and University of the Philippines Diliman and to shopping malls like the Riverbanks Mall, SM Marikina, and Fairwood Mall.

Another developer Federal Properties is building a new tower residences along the Sumulong Highway in Marikina City.

With this quick turnaround from a major disaster, Marikina looks ahead to a great flood out of despair but of investments for its people.

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Faces of Marikina

SENTINEL Pangkalusugang Marikina

Dies Oli Amerikana Restaurant

By Mario Salazar
Photos by Barry Hendillada

ARTS AND CULTURE

1. Sonorang Pangkalusugan ng Marikina or Kapitan Moy Building

The former house of Leonardo Guevara or Kapitan Moy, father of Marikina's Shoe Industry, is a structure marked by simplicity and longevity, solidity and restful elegance.

The Kapitan Moy ancestral house is the product of architectural evolution. The steep, hip roof, the post and lintel construction, the seemingly light and quite airy structure, and the elevated quarters are features derived from the Philippine style, the "Bahay Kubo".

However, in sense of grandeur and solidity the dramatic arrangement of space, the use of masonry and simple ornamental spaces are its heritage from European architecture.

Kapitan Moy ancestral house is the architecture of a fanciful age, resonant of exotic-romantic symbols. It reflects the architecture of the world the at that time, from Jose Guevara, being a "Maginoo" and Don Laureano "Kapitan Moy" Guevara, being an "Illustrado" and a "Ilustrador".

The house's address gave merit to the befitted standing at that time for the elite houses stood on the plaza beside the church and the Municipio.

Location: 2F Shoe Street, Sta. Elena, Marikina City

2. Shoe Museum

The Shoe Museum was conceived in 1998 under then Mayor Bayani F. Fernando on the assumption that the City, being the Shoe Capital of the Philippines can be a significant venue for nurturing the historical and cultural values of its shoe industry. It was opened in February 16, 2001 and was initially called the Footwear Museum of Marikina.

The building which houses the museum was used as an armored during the Spanish period. It was also a detention cell during the Filipino-American war where General Macario Sakay, one of the leaders of the Katipunan, was held. At the latter part of the American regime, it was converted into a movie yard for the American soldiers. After the 2nd World War, the Tuason family used the building as a shoe mill for the entire barkada.

PANDESAL from Pan de Amerikana

OVERLASTING (top) and Wakasan (below)

The city is a complete package what with different places to visit and food that fits your palate

Rock bottom factory prices at the Marikina Trade Fair

MARIKINA has a new crowd-drawer aside from its yearly Tuluyan sa Ilog.

The Marikina Trade Fair at the ground floor of the Marikina Sports Park is drawing huge crowds both wholesalers, families, and individual buyers nationwide since it opened last November.

Mayor Del de Guzman commended the managers of the city's tourism and trade promotions office (MCTTPO) for the initial success of the project which has been experiencing robust sales and increasing patronage for the past four weeks.

"This is a fun Marikina Shoe Expo of our sorts," said De Guzman.

The trade fair is a festival of the masses who comes from a shoe-making family the explained that due to opening of the Marikina Trade Fair is just one step towards the eventual return of the Marikina Shoe industry's glorious days. It has experienced a fall during the past several years, mainly due to competition from countries like China, Korea and other neighboring countries.

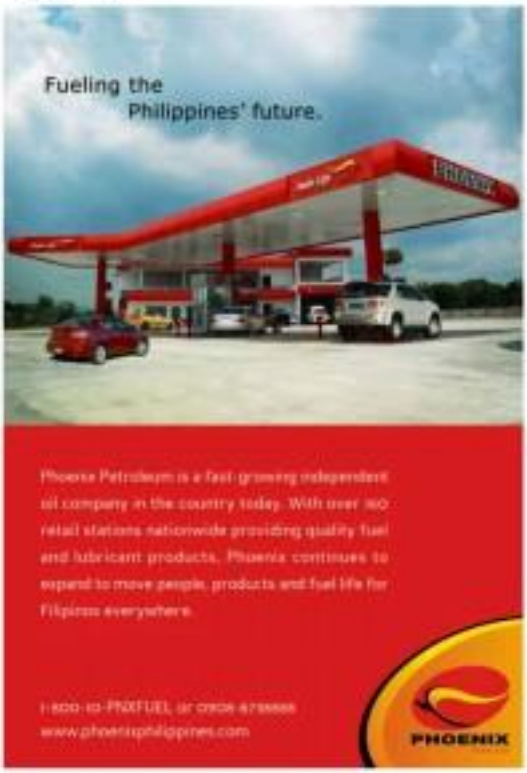
It is a joint project between the City Government and local shoe manufacturers to reinstate the shoe and leather craft industry of Marikina.

Many from shoe and bag manufacturers, led by Valentino shoes, are participating in this showcase of the city's best products ranging from shoes, bags and other leather goods at factory prices.

Products on display Marikina made and the organizers assessed the quality and craftsmanship of products to be sold. Satisfied buyers praised designs about the such home-to factory prices and promised to be back for more.

The trade fair is located at the first floor/ground of the Marikina Sports Park along Mc-Donald's Avenue. After touring the city local and foreign tourists can enjoy bargain shopping from 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM, Mondays to Sundays and 10AM - 3PM during holidays.

Marikina Christmas Celebration Calendar of Activities



SHOE Museum

Faces of Marikina

Frontpage F1

Shoemaking is a striking manifestation of Marikenos' inherent creativity, passion, and entrepreneurial spirit. The Shoe Museum captures these traits and, in the process, literally establishes Marikina's pre-eminent place in the country's shoemaking industry.

The Shoe Museum is deftly organized into the following collections: that of the world renowned shoes of former Philippine First Lady Imelda Marcos, assortment of shoes worn by personages such as former Philippine presidents, vice presidents, senators, ambassadors, and Marikina mayors, traditional footwear from various countries, and a collection of exotics or rare, open-toed shoe design competitions.

The museum acquired its with the knowhow of making shoes with the shoe lasts used as master molds of a shoe and the different animal skins used like alligator skin, snake skin, pigskin, calfskin and sharkskin. It also exhibits a life-size diorama that shows shoemaking in Marikina as was done during the early stages of its shoe industry. The 800 pairs of shoes of Mrs. Marcos, are part of the 1,800 pairs collection which she accumulated personally during her duties as first lady during her husband's 20-year incumbency. She wore these shoes in meetings with dignitaries both here and abroad. Photos showing Mrs. Marcos during key state occasions accompany some of the shoes on display. These shoes were literally the hand, shoe and fashion designers and manufacturers as they carry the exquisite designs and fine craftsmanship of the foreign shoe artisans.

Location: JP Rizal Street, San Roque, Marikina City

GASTRONOMIC DELIGHTS

3. Pan de Amerikana Restaurant

Pan de Amerikana is probably one of Marikina's pride. It became an instant hit because of the distinct smoky taste of its 1950s style pan de sal and of course its affordable price. Add to that is the glamorous pan de Amerikana that is now the signature pasalubong item of Marikina that ranges from the Pan de Amerikana, Pan de Ensaymada, Pan de Monay, Pan de Sorbetes, Pan de Ube, Pan de Pinipig, Pan de Mais, Pan de Pasas, Pan de Pinoy, Pan de Regalo, Pan de Ube Pinipig, Pan de Mais Pinipig, Pan de Pasas Pinipig, Pan de Pinoy Pinipig, Pan de Regalo Pinipig

ENTERTAINMENT

Julie Bonnin G. Velarde

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DID YOU KNOW...

GMA NETWORK'S annual Christmas Short Film Festival features Lyn Ching, Regine Tolentino, Lovi Poe, Bella Padilla, Luane Ty, Mel Pescante and Mikee Jo aired Saturday. Yuletide stories directed by BA Rivera, Mario Jimenez, Ted Montoya, Maria Archeta, Paul Soriano and Richard Arap.

Independents' day

Stars, industry leaders to grace PDI tribute to indie filmmakers on Dec. 16

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

AS PART of the paper's 25th anniversary celebrations, the Inquirer Entertainment is throwing a party on Dec. 16, the "1st Inquirer Indie Tribune," citing 25 independent filmmakers. Even mainstream stars and industry leaders are set to join the revelry.

The Entertainment staff asked each of the honorees to invite an actor [who] had appeared in any of their films] to help us with the tribute.

We didn't have to ask twice. Most of the filmmakers' choices quickly and enthusiastically accepted.

One of the actors, award-winning Bemin Lacuesta, said it was his honor to [be the tribute] Veteran actress Anita Linda, [naturally] replied, "I'd love to be there."

(Ms Linda won [best director for "Lola" at the 34th Asia-Pacific Film Awards held in Taipei over the weekend. Director Brillante Mendoza, one of the Inquirer honorees, accepted the trophy for her.)

Some icons are actively [supporting] for the night to present the award to their favorite directors.

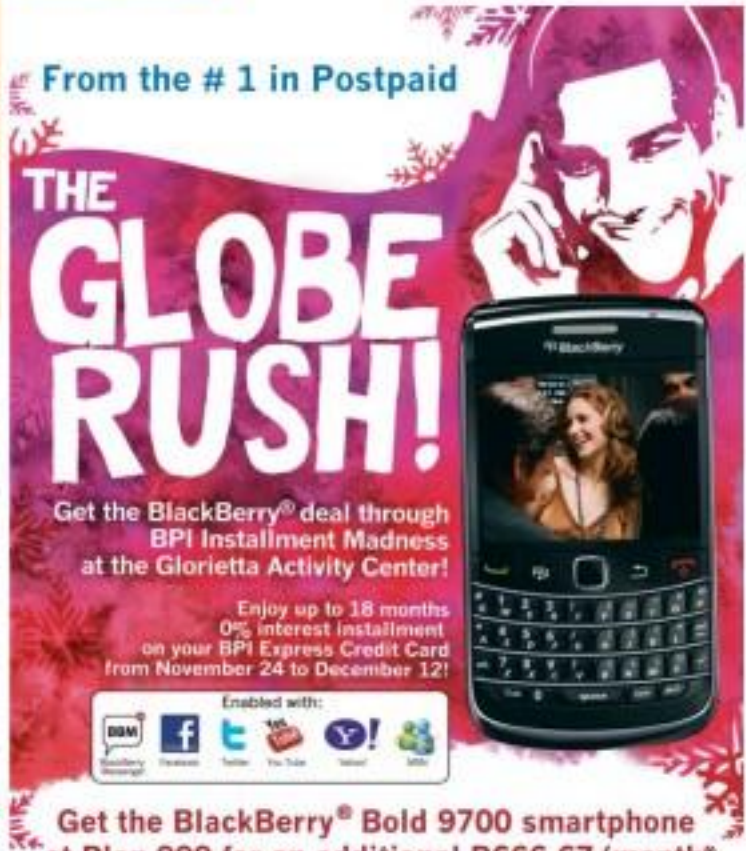
If all goes as planned, the night will serve as a reunion, not only of filmmakers and their lead actors, but also of the cast of some of the most memorable and most-awarded indie films to the last few years.

More [it is a landmark event that] celebrates Philippine cinema in all its daring and diversity, industry leaders—including FDCP Film Development Council of the Philippines) chair Briccio Santos and MTRCB (Movie and Television Review and Classification Board) chair Mary Grace Poe-Llamanzares—are expected to attend.

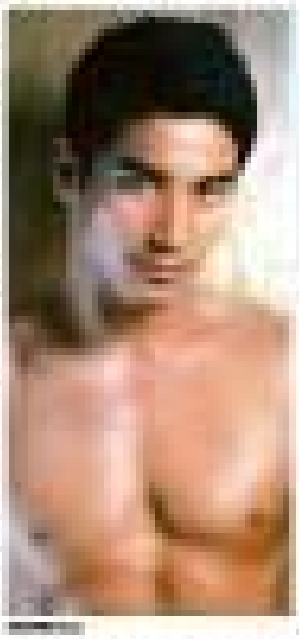
Also invited are artistes, producers, critics, educators and scholars, and representatives of local digital film festivals—Cinemalaya, Cinema One and Cinemanila—that fueled the indie boom.

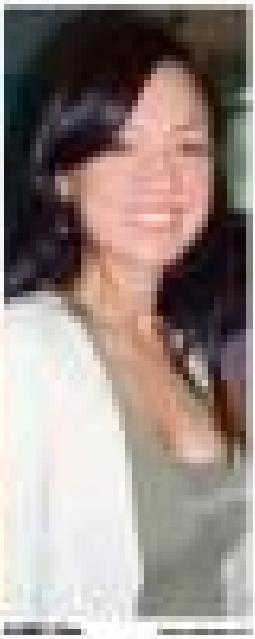
Asked, for a special feature on the honorees [tomorrow in Inquirer], what he thought united mainstream and independent filmmakers, indie John Torres replied, "The desire to tell stories."

E-mail: bayansandiego@hotmail.com



Pretty Singer's secret scandal revealed





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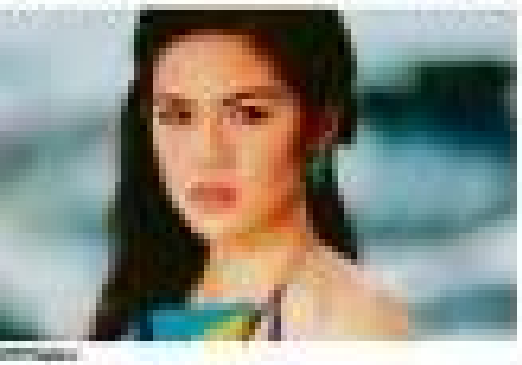

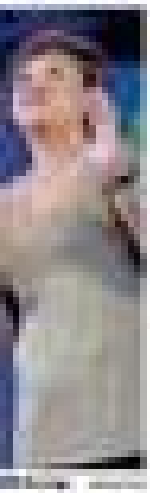

CINEMA

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WOW

Top 10 films at the US box office

	Title	Gross	Lw
1	Tangled	$21.0 M	(1)
2	Harry Potter: Deathly Hallows	$16.7 M	(1)
3	Unstoppable	$8.1 M	(2)
4	Burlesque	$8.1 M	(3)
5	Love and Other Drugs	$6.7 M	(4)
6	Megamind	$5.8 M	(5)
7	Due Date	$4.3 M	(6)
8	Faster	$3.8 M	(7)
9	The Warrior's Way	$3.1 M	(8)
10	The Next Three Days	$2.7 M	(9)

KC CONCEPCION

Willing to talk it out with Mariel

AFTER BEING at the receiving end of Mariel Rodriguez's alleged negative comments, KC Concepcion is willing to settle any misunderstanding between her and the "Pilipinas Win na Win" host.

According to endless reports, Mariel rumored KC of copying her hosting style, and claimed that the Regamefan network gave KC her own morning talk show only because she's the daughter of Sharon Cuneta.

In an interview with ABS-CBN's "U Live" on Saturday, KC said she was open to review matters with Mariel, and that it would be much better if people in show biz could be more upfront.

"Kinda anyone ...Kung meron lang pong gustong makipag-usap sa 'kin behind my back, make sure na kaya niyang sabihin sa harap ko," she said.

KC said she and Mariel were never close friends, but if Mariel denies ever saying anything negative about her, KC said, "then it's all good."

She added: "Hahabaaaaaw nga minsan may nang-aaway sa 'kin ... siguro, after a few months, sila rin 'yung lalapit."

Allan Policarpio, contributor

Vic on Pia: We're good

By Allan Policarpio
Contributor

DESPITE RUMORS that his romance with "Eat Bulaga" co-host, Pia Guanio, has lost its spark, Vic Sotto recently said everything between them was okay.

"We're good," Bossing said on GMA-7's "Startalk" last Saturday. "We decided not to talk about it the minute say meet. If there's an important announcement or an important development, we'll let the people know."

Asked about Pia's alleged new secret admirer, Vic prompt by shot back, "I don't know, duh ba?"

As in previous years, Vic said he and Pia would probably spend Christmas together.

However, he said, he wouldn't be able to go with Pia's family abroad due to visa problems. Instead, he will spend the rest of the holidays here with his family.

The best teacher

While Oyo Boy Sotto and Kristine Hermosa bring the heat in January next year, Vic has been brazen in the after yet again by one of his children. The ever-cool comic said, laughing, "Minsan no silang lahat; kung sagot ko na 'yung lech! (They can all go ahead; I'll take care of the fee, lah. See!) Marriage will come if it should," he added.

Asked about any advice he is giving the couple, Vic quipped that he was hardly an authority in marital counseling, having committed "blunders in the past."

He continued, "I'm not the type, either, to interfere in the life of others. My style is, I'm here, if you need me. Just ask."

Experience is definitely still the best teacher, said Vic. "When they start living together, that's the time that they'll learn how to handle things. And a very important word to consider is compromise."

Meanwhile, Vic is back in filming. He and Sen. Bong Revilla have starred in two of the highest-grossing films in previous Metro Manila Film Festivals (MMFF). This year, the two of them are teaming up for a big fantasy-action festival flick, "Si Agimat at Si Enteng Kabisote."

With two box-office kings as top billa, Vic expects the movie to be yet another giant hit.

"I'm expecting no doble ang mapping results nito. I think this is my biggest project.

He also commended his co-star's work ethic, and said the two of them bonded well throughout the making of the movie.

"Marunot siyang mga tanong na kasalungat-sakin. Ako na pagdating sa eyebags, dalid pumiba kaming sorpresa sa eyebags. May pagka-workaholic siya. Walang ungol kahit ano pagpasa ng direction," Vic said.

VIC Sotto and Pia Guanio

AXN Beyond is now a Super-Sized Channel!

THIS MOVIE IS NOT YET RATED BY THE MTRCB
OPENS DEC. 15
"MICKY WARD IS ONE OF MANNY PAQUIAO'S FAVORITE FIGHTERS."

"I would love for Manny to see the movie. I would go to the gym to study Manny as he drills. Every time he was training at Wild Card Gym, I watched him because my whole approach was, I wanted to look like a Manny Paquiao-caliber fighter. Manny is the best in the world. Who better to learn from?" --Mark Wahlberg

BASED ON A TRUE STORY
MARK WAHLBERG
CHRISTIAN BALE
AMY ADAMS
THE FIGHTER
THE LEGEND OF MICKY WARD

Opening Today

The Man Every Woman Wants

Directed by Gabriela Tagliavini, stars Ryan Eleni, Daniela Amavia, Alexis Arquette, Justin Walker, Michelle Anne Johnson, Kim Lowers, Evan Cochran

In the distant future, women rule the world. Unlucky in his personal and professional pursuits, loser (Eleni) falls in love with the perfect woman (Amavia). She cooks and cleans without complaint and is submissive in bed. The catch is: She is a plastic humanoid, incapable of returning his affection. This sci-fi indie film won Best Director at the Sci-Fi Film Fest, as well as top prizes at the New York International Independent Film and Video Festival and the Santa Monica Film Festival.

"CHRONICLES of Narnia"

Chronicles of Narnia: Voyage of the Dawn Treader

Directed by Michael Apted, stars Ben Barnes, Skandar Keynes, Georgie Henley, Eddie Izzard, Will Poulter, Gary Sweet, Bill Nighy, Tilda Swinton

The Pevensie kids (Keynes, Henley) return to Narnia and embark on a colorful journey with King Caspian (Barnes). Filmfolk's Cara Nash thinks "the third installment is for the most part an exciting and emotionally resonant adventure." Guardian's Andrew Pulver agrees: "Second are many of CS Lewis' silliness that you are barely given time to linger before you are whisked on to the next." Sydney Morning Herald's Ellen Boothe says it "has all the magic of a boy hunt in a loft."

PELIKULA NI ALBERTO P. MARTINEZ
ROSARIO
SINO ANG MAGMAMAHAL SA KANYA NG WAGAS?
JENNYLYN MERCADO YUL SERVO DENNIS TRILLO
Opens December 25

ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Ruffa: Nothing to hide about 'mystery guy'

RUFFA GUTIERREZ was spotted at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport arrival area with a gorgeous foreigner. Who's the mystery guy?

"I'd rather not call him a 'mystery guy' because we have nothing to hide," Ruffa clarifies. "We traveled with a group of friends to attend the launch of Lanvin in Hong Kong. It's funny that they took shots of just me and him. I'm no stalker, so am I doing any hanky-panky so it's really no big deal with me to be seen in public with him."

Ruffa says the guy is a Brazilian-Spanish businessman and she'd rather keep his identity private, "because he's not in showbiz anyway."

Does her mom Jeanette Gutierrez approve of him? "Mom and Dad have met him," says Ruffa. "They like him but it's too early to say where things would lead. What's important is I'm happy because I can be more of myself with him."

The twinkle in Ruffa's eyes is back. It surprises all her friends confirmed.

No rift!

Joey Marquez refutes the rumor that he has a rift with Arjan Estrada and Richard Gomez, allegedly because of unsettled money matters after the death of their beloved manager, Douglas Quijano.

But is it he true that when Joey was invited to be a guest on TV5's Sunday noontime show "SOS," hosts John and Gana were not too keen about it? "Busy lang kayo pareho," explains Joey. "Para maalala pa rin kami magsama. At saka ng pinagsamahan namin, ayaw nang isenggang nakakasira sa friendship namin."

In end all speculations, the three of them should do a remake of their legendary sitcom, "Bubbles Lolako." Or sino kaya pa ang iba.

Loudest whisper

The loudest whisper is that Xenth Geronimo, Anne Curtis and Cristine Reyes are leaving their home network and moving to TV5.

If and when that materializes, the three beauties will be leaving their just-on-candy in the biggest network.

Could it be true that because of Mavi's loss We did Remember's pivotal role to Willie Revillame's TV comeback via "Willing Willie," ABS-CBN is taking it out on Sarah who happens to be Vivo's prized asset?

Marcus Madrigal

'Star Confessions'

Crissy Rotoles will reveal her soft side on her new show, "Star Confessions" on TV5 (premieres tonight after "Willing Willie").

The plus-episode features the life story of host-dancer Congratulations. Next in line is Boxsman Sheckids biography (or should I say BIOgraphy?).

If Crissy's own life story would be made, who would she want to portray her and what would the highlight be? "My choice would be Candy Pangilinan," she says. "Dahil sa mga sweet-sweetan ko bukop ko bilang single mom."

A celebrity's life is an open book. In Crissy's case, you'll get to read between the lines from cover to cover.

Unique collaborations

"Visions" is a one-night-only affair that will showcase the most unique collaborations between more than 50 of the most promising and stellar names in show biz, mixing fashion and photography.

The event will be held tomorrow, 9 p.m. at Amber Dimitrangu, The Fort, Taguig.

Tawhay's calendar girl

Eya Villanueva's beauty and brains made her the perfect choice as Tawhay Wines 5 Stars' calendar image model for 2011. Though Eya has been known to be conservative, dancing offers in the past to pose in various men's magazines, she believed the time was right to show another dimension of herself, not just as an actress but as a person.

E-mail: wearegloboluxe@yahoo.com

JOEY Marquez

Dolly Wood

Dolly Anne Carvajal

Overheard

Katy Perry's Christmas wish

SAN DIEGO—Katy Perry, working on the special "VH1 Divas Salute the Troops": "What do I want for Christmas? Well, I hope the troops come home very safely." She then delivered a message to service members: "Be careful out there during the holidays. Keep your Skype and your iChat on because I know some of you I are many from family..." AP

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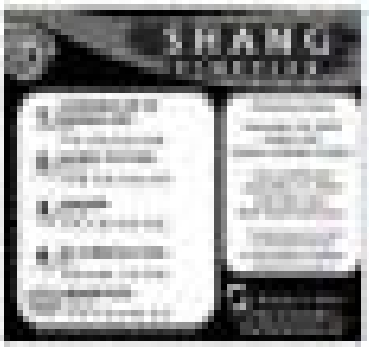
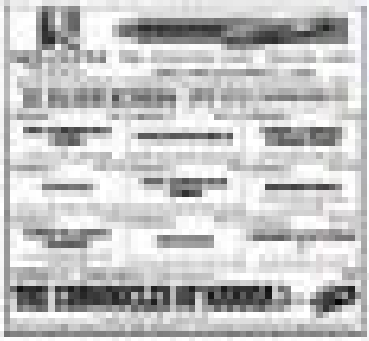
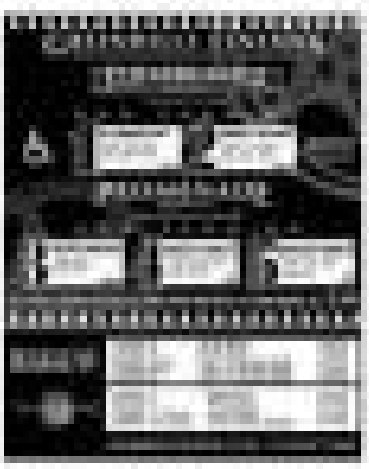
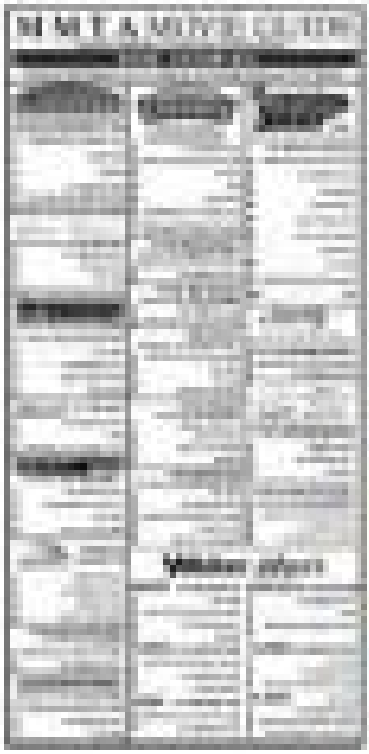
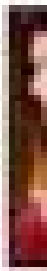




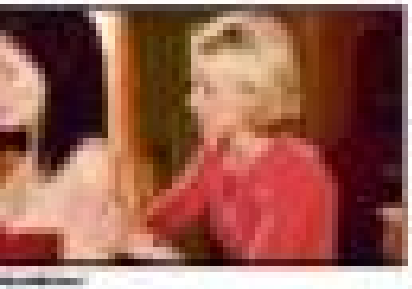


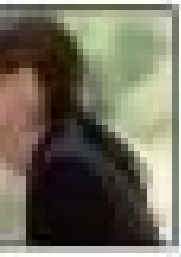


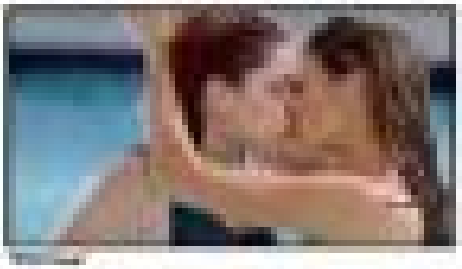
H'wood's 5 m



most famous lesbian scenes







A matter of trust—and consequent commitment

JESSICA SODEI, who emcees the show "Kapuso Mo, Jessica Soho," recently marked its anniversary with a special that included interviews with and features on pop-cultural icons like Manny Pacquiao, Dolphy and Regine Velasquez. He made it a point to catch the special edition, because we wanted to see what made Soho "Soho" in an interview, comparing it to other practitioners of that popular yet difficult craft.

After the long show, we had some answers: Jessica gets good subjects at ease. You may interject: There are popular media figures, they're used to doing interviews, so why do they need to be "put at ease"?

If you've seen other interviews with Alli, you know that they often clam up when dodgy questions are asked—unless they trust the interviewer and believe he has no hidden agenda to get an embarrassing quote out of them, or show them in a bad light for sensational ratings.

The ability to earn and gain that all-important trust is at the heart of a good interview, and Soho's ability to encourage and engender it is a decided plus for her.

Which is not to say that her easy-to-use and agreeable result in a slick, apple-polishing interview, with no surprises allowed. That would be most unnerving and ego-boosting for the guest, but viewers would simply stop watching.

After Jessica got on her guests' good side, she sometimes comes up with unexpected jabs, jibes and zings like Regine's penchant for getting broken. Manny's "shabbiness" reputation and Dolphy's "kinda malandi" ways.

True, these are merely easy stimulators, but they create a light bond between guest, interviewer and viewer that enables Soho to dig deeper the next time around. Having already "disarmed" her guest, it's easier for her to follow up with an even more personally revelatory query that her guest may otherwise have resisted or drawn back from answering.

Having said all that, we still wish Soho can find time to review her interviewing career for the past couple of years and see that it's eroded to be on the "light-hearted" side.

Doesn't absolutely nothing wrong with that, but the fact that a poll has revealed that Soho is one of the "most trusted" people in the country suggests that she has an obligation to put that exceptional trust to better use, by tackling significant issues on her show more often.

It may be painful not that many, one shows aren't expected to dig deep, but just to provide an interesting and bracing variety of features. However, we submit that, as Soho matures in her career, she should at least thoughtfully consider a consequent deepening of her own commitment to the many viewers who have angled her out as deserving of their trust. Perhaps, it's now time for her viewers to show Jessica the way?

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

"TALK ASIA"

K-Pop group Super Junior in 'Talk Asia'

CNN's Asian Correspondent Anna Coren sits down in Seoul with two members of the South Korean band Super Junior—Leeteuk and Heechul—to find out how they stay ahead in the competitive world of K-Pop.

"Talk Asia" stars joins Super Junior before a concert, getting ready to greet over 5,000 screaming fans.

The two stars talk about how the Internet has helped spread the popularity of the Korean Pop or K-pop phenomenon around the world and how social media networks have enabled them to communicate with their fans in and outside of Korea.

The interview airs Dec. 8, 8:30 p.m.; Dec. 9, 12:30 p.m.; Dec. 11, 10:30 p.m.; Dec. 12, 3:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.; Dec. 13, 11 a.m.

Visit www.cnnasiapacific.com

"BORN To Be Wild"

'Born' project

On its third anniversary, "Born To Be Wild" launches its latest version of the Born Project, an annual activity which solicits viewers donations via pledges and volunteer work.

Last year, hundreds of people pledged to do their share in protecting the environment through simple measures like cutting down unnecessary consumption, bringing reusable bags to the grocery and recycling at home.

This year, "Born" takes pledging one step further by backing something functional from seemingly nothing.

Part 1 of the episode airs tonight after "Valor" on GMA 7.

Top model

Who between Ann Wuyt and Chelsey Hershey has what it takes to step into the world of high fashion and become "America's Next Top Model"?

The two strut their stuff to grace the pages of Vogue Italia and a modeling contract with international agency IMG Models in the show's episode finale tomorrow at 10 p.m. on ETC.

Judges are the show's creator and executive producer Tyra Banks, fashion editor Andre Leon Talley, photographer Nigel Barker, photo shoot creative director Jay Manuel and runway trainer Miss J Alexander.

"GOSSIP Girl"

Latest gossip

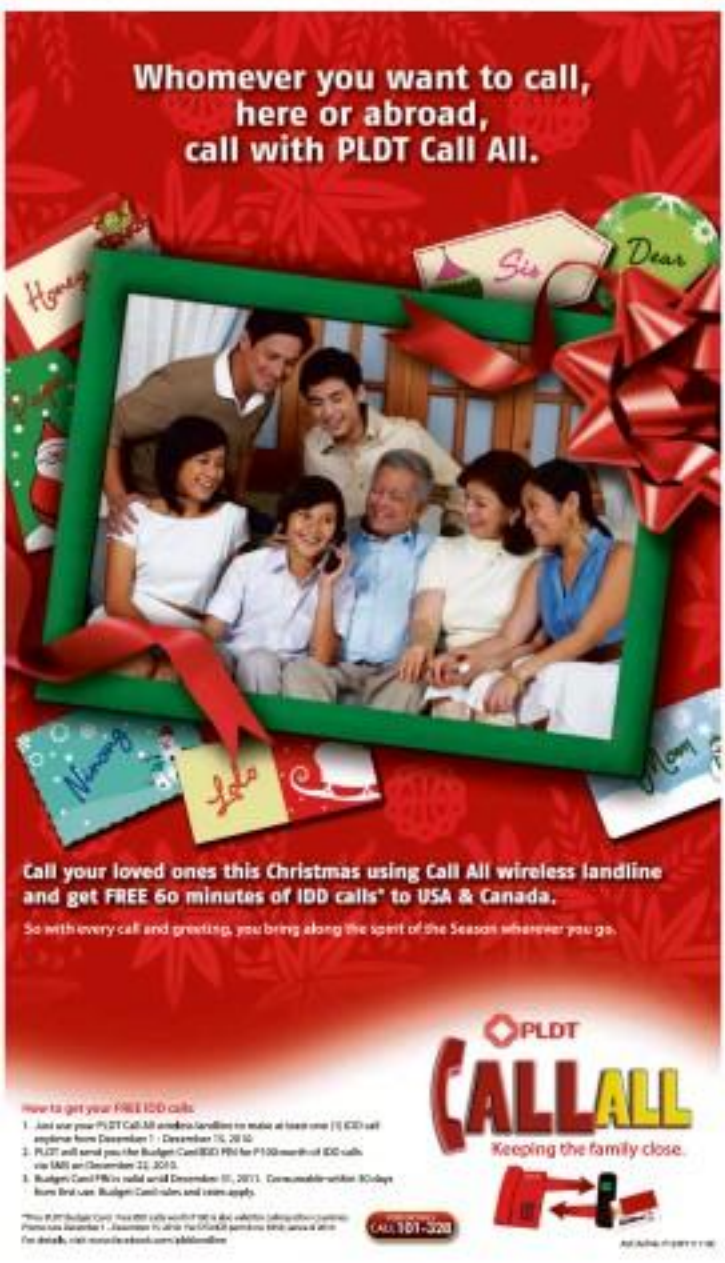
Fans of "Gossip Girl" have been speculating that what new girl Juliet Rhodes Cassidy has in store for Serena Vanderwoodsen (Blake Lively), and why her involvement heralds serena hell (rest on taking down the Big Apple's new it girl).

Also a chance lunch meeting with Kate (Diana Agron), Juliet finds her key into the world of Manhattan's Upper East Side elite befriending the girl Serena had left heart-broken over the summer.

"Gossip Girl" season 4 airs Thursdays at 8 p.m. on ETC.

Birthday girl

"The Sweet Life" kicks off host Lucy Torres' birthday celebration today with impersonators of Lucy, Kris Aquino, former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Manny Pacquiao, Imelda Marcos and other members of the Senate/Representatives.

Tomorrow, viewers get the chance to get to know Lucy a bit more through the ordinary people she works with, both in showbiz and in Congress. There are musical numbers from Jaya, Lo Diva, and Sinsuat Esperanza.

The show airs weekdays at 5 p.m. on Q Channel 11.